

P.V. NARASIMHA RAO

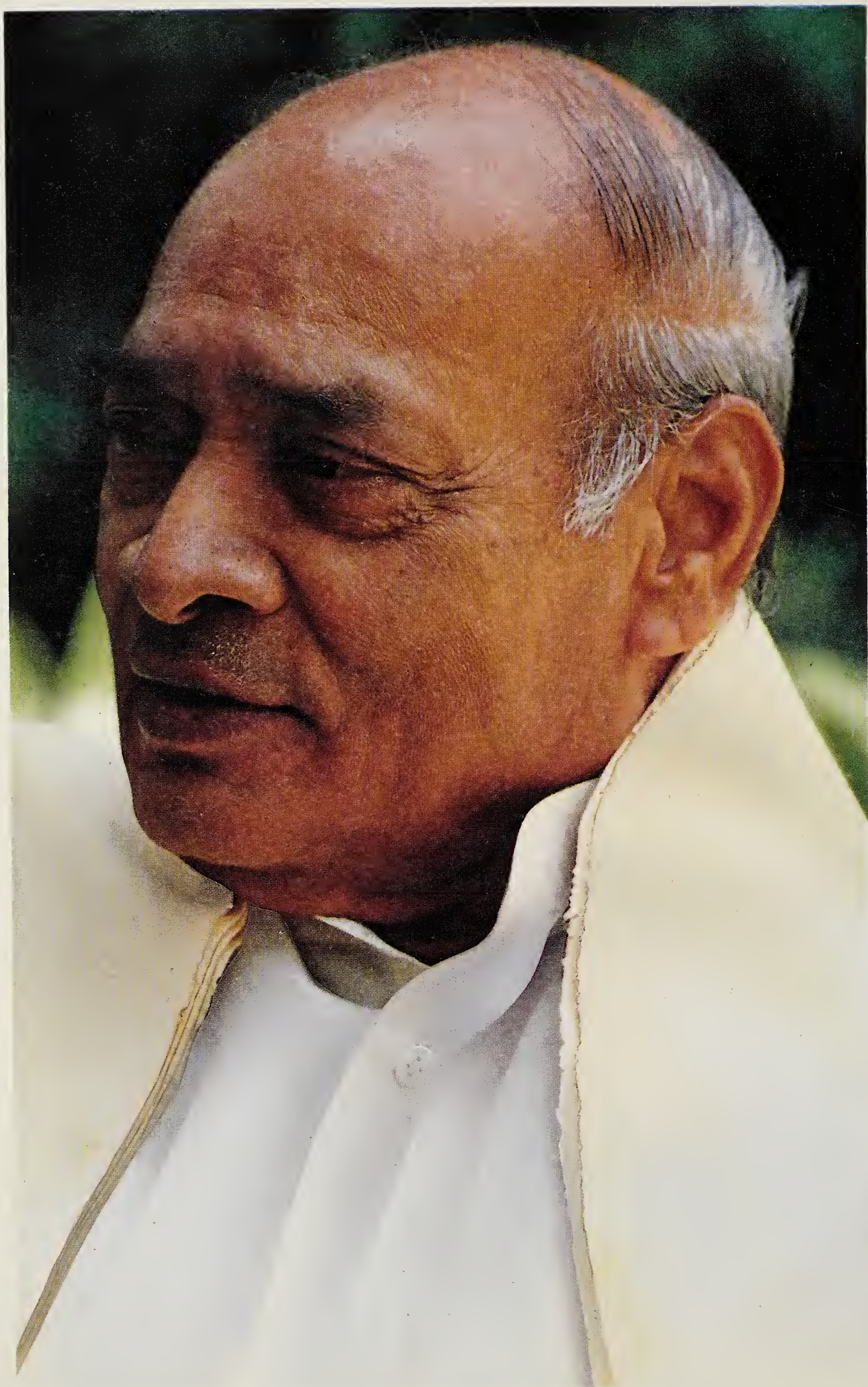
SELECTED SPEECHES

1993-94

This volume contains the selected speeches of the Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, covering the period July 1993 to June 1994.

The selection focuses on a wide range of themes of national and global importance and outlines Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao's perception of the nation's priorities and goals and also his interests, concerns and abiding faith in India's spiritual heritage and democratic traditions.

This also reflects his determination to work for peace, equality and universal harmony and to lead the country to strength, unity and towards all-round progress.



P.V. NARASIMHA RAO

SELECTED SPEECHES

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Preface

This is the third volume of the selected speeches of the Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, covering the period July 1993 to June 1994. In addition to speeches, the volume includes texts of broadcasts, Press conferences and interviews. The speeches originally delivered in Hindi & Telugu appear here in translation.

The contents are grouped under seven chapters — National Affairs, Economic Scene, Science & Technology and Environment, Education, Culture and Sports, Social Welfare, International Affairs and Press Conferences and Interviews.

In each chapter the speeches are arranged in chronological order. When two or more speeches deal with the same subject, those appear under one heading.

The volume does not claim to be a complete record of the Prime Minister's speeches during the period, although an attempt has been made to include his more important public statements.



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I

National Affairs

Revitalising the Panchayati Raj Institutions

FIRST OF ALL, I would like to place on record my appreciation for the States who had ratified the Constitution (Seventy-second Amendment) Bill, 1991, after it was passed by both the Houses of Parliament in December 1992 within a record time of three months. After receiving the assent of the President on 20 April 1993, this Bill became part of our most fundamental document—the Constitution of India. To expedite the process of devolution of powers to the people, the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992, was brought into force with effect from 24 April 1993 with the issue of notification by the Ministry of Rural Development.

The Constitution of India, under Article 40, enjoined on the State to make provision for the organization of Village Panchayats and endow them with such authority and powers as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government. However, we have not been able to live up to this expectation till now. While the institutions of democracy at the national and State levels have, indeed, grown in strength and stature, the same cannot be said in respect of Panchayati Raj institutions at the village, intermediate and district levels. The present Constitution Amendment Act is, therefore, an attempt to fulfil this objective and is based on the recommendations made by various committees in the past and the widespread consultations held at various levels.

Our democracy cannot become strong unless the democracy at the village is strong. A broad consensus, cutting across party lines, has emerged over the past few years and it was realised that genuine development of rural areas can take place only through a process of decentralised planning and implementation, fully involving the local

people. To achieve this goal, we stand committed to the task of devolution of powers and financial resources to the Panchayati Raj institutions enabling fullest participation of people in the process of nation building and development.

I am aware that the subject of local bodies lies within the purview of the States and we have, therefore, restricted ourselves to only a few but basic features of these bodies while enacting the Constitution Amendment. We have no intention to encroach upon the jurisdiction of the States, as assigned to them in our Constitution. I may reiterate that, what we have made is just a beginning in this direction and the major responsibility still lies with the State governments. It is for them to decide what further powers, authority and functions should be devolved on Village Panchayats and other local authorities. We do not intend to impose any rigid or uniform pattern in a country with diverse features such as ours.

Essentially, the Amendment Act lays down certain ground rules which will constitute the basic structure or core features for the local authorities. This consists of a well-defined duration, safeguards against external interference in the form of prolonged supersession, provision for regular election, proper and meaningful representation to weaker sections and women and devolution of powers, authority and adequate finances. The rest of the field has been left entirely to the States.

One of the major reasons which hampered the development of Panchayati Raj institutions has been the absence of regular and periodic elections within a time-frame. Hence, these institutions have had unstable tenures. That is why we have provided for a uniform term of five years and elections will be mandatory before the expiry of this term. In the event of dissolution for some reason, it has been made obligatory for the State to conduct the elections within six months for the constitution of a new body. This will provide continuity and strength to these institutions and they will be able to establish themselves as effective and strong people's institutions. The Act also prohibits dissolving of the Panchayats before the expiry of the term by

amending any law for the time being in force. Thus, these bodies will be able to complete the full term of five years in the normal course.

In order to ensure a genuine and meaningful participation of the weaker sections of the society, the Act provides reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the membership to these bodies at all the three levels in proportion to their population. Mere participation at the membership level may not prove to be meaningful. Therefore, the Act provides for reservation in the offices of chairpersons also for these categories in proportion to their population in the States. It is a unique provision and would go a long way in according a proper voice to these weaker sections in decision-making at the local level.

Women constitute half of our population. In order to give them an opportunity of participation in the local affairs, not less than one-third of the posts of chairpersons have been reserved in their favour. These provisions would bring in a qualitative change in the composition of local bodies and make women and weaker sections equal partners in progress and development.

Panchayati Raj institutions can grow and develop in stature only if they are provided with a strong financial base, commensurate with the powers and authorities entrusted to them. More so, this flow of financial resources should go to these bodies as a matter of right. It is for this purpose that the Act provides for a system of financial transfers on a mandatory basis. A State Finance Commission will have to be set up within one year and, thereafter every five years, to review the financial position of Panchayats and make appropriate recommendations for strengthening the resource base of these institutions. States should take urgent steps to establish the State Finance Commissions so that the process of assuring adequate financial resources to these institutions could be set in motion.

Free and fair elections in a democracy constitute the most important step in securing trust and respect from the people for any institution. Therefore, there will be a State Election Commissioner for

superintendence, direction and control of the elections and preparation of electoral rolls and the conduct of all panchayat elections. Since a number of States will be going for Panchayat elections next year after duly amending their Act, it will be appropriate to take necessary steps to constitute the State Election Commission early.

We have taken adequate care not to disturb the present arrangements existing in some of the special areas like scheduled and tribal areas under Article 244, the States of Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram, and the hill areas of Manipur. However, if any State wants to extend the provisions of the Panchayati Raj Act to the scheduled areas therein, it would be welcome. Similarly, the states of Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram are also empowered to extend the provisions of the Act to their States by passing a resolution with the prescribed majority in the State Legislative Assemblies.

Through this Constitution Amendment Act, we intend to restructure, reinforce and revitalise the Panchayati Raj institutions as an organic part of our democratic process by according them proper Constitutional status and recognition. In this process, we are not doing any favour to the people, but giving back the powers which really belong to them. As I mentioned earlier, the objective of the Constitution Amendment Act is to prescribe a framework for the Panchayati Raj institutions. Much remains to be done and most of this has to be done by the State governments. You will agree with me when I say that the restructuring and strengthening of these institutions cannot be brought about by mere legislation; it requires a change in our approach and in our attitude. The Constitution Amendment Act is only a beginning and represents the sincerity and commitment of this Government towards democratic decentralisation.

With the enactment and enforcement of the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992, from 24th April, 1993, the States have to amend their respective legislations pertaining to Panchayats, to bring them in conformity with the Act, within one year i.e. before 24th April 1994, States have to draw a time bound action plan for completing this work, preferably by December 1993. While certain mandatory

provisions are to be necessarily included in the State Acts, direction has been given to the States in many other issues while modifying their Panchayat Acts. In these areas, the States will have to consider the various alternatives and select the one which suits them best. I am happy to note that Karnataka has already taken the initiative and brought into force a comprehensive Panchayati Raj legislation on the lines indicated in the Act, on 10 May 1993. I understand that they will shortly be holding elections to the new bodies.

Since a large number of members will be coming from the weaker sections of the society, it will be necessary to give them comprehensive training about their roles, responsibilities and overall philosophy behind these Panchayati Raj institutions. They have to know the procedures, rules and working of the government and these local institutions, to effectively discharge the roles assigned to them. This training should not be a one-time affair and should be conducted at regular intervals for continuous updating of knowledge and skills. States should take stock of the situation and make provisions for training of Panchayati Raj functionaries, both official and non-official. Ministry of Rural Development has also been working on evolving a comprehensive training programme for the functionaries and will suitably assist the States in their efforts.

The Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992, has broken a distinctly new ground. The Panchayati Raj institutions deserve to succeed as the principal vehicles for rural development. Essential prerequisites for their success are the political will and the administrative back up. The political will at the Central level has been exhibited by the near unanimous adoption of the Constitution Amendment Act. It is expected that the States will also follow this up by amending their respective Panchayat Acts within the prescribed time-frame, preferably through a process of consensus.

A great deal of responsibility will still rest on the political leaders at the national and State levels to provide proper guidance to the newly elected representatives in the Panchayati Raj institutions. With proper understanding and appreciation by both the polity and the bureau-

cracy, Panchayati Raj institutions can develop as vigorous institutions of local self-government. The economic development through various programmes during the Eighth Five Year Plan has to be channelised by providing adequate funds to the Panchayati Raj institutions. With the active involvement of the grass roots organisations, both in planning and implementation, the face of rural India will change, bringing about the long cherished goal of growth with social justice.

I hope that the State governments will now carry this message forward and ensure establishment of a vibrant Panchayati Raj structure in every part of this great country.

The Hon'ble Ministers from different States may kindly enlighten us about the action programme prepared by them to complete the process of legislative changes and administrative action, and with their views and suggestions, to enable us to take appropriate steps in this direction.

Now, before I conclude, I have just one or two thoughts to share with you.

It doesn't really redound to the quality of the Indian polity that after forty years, a legislation and action thereon which belongs legitimately to the State should partially be taken over by the Central Government and Parliament. It doesn't bring any credit either to the Centre or to the States. Please ponder over this.

Why is it that we have to say in the Constitution of India that just like the Assembly and Parliament, the Panchayats also would have to go for elections every five years? This was not the original intention. If a State wants elections in three years, there was nothing to stop it. But what did we actually do? Some States never went to polls. The choice was between three years and five years and even seven years, if you wish, but the choice was not between having elections and not having elections, or having elections once and not having elections for the next twenty years. So, there is something that went wrong somewhere.

At the State level, we—I am not talking of one person—have taken liberties with our own laws to the extent that we make them inoperative. Some difficulty, some flood, some drought, some small fracas here and there, some rioting and the effect is that Panchayat election is postponed. I can recall any number of instances where this has been done. You don't do that or take that kind of liberty with the Assembly elections and the Parliament elections. So, ultimately this has been necessitated by certain acts and omissions at the State level. They have all been guilty of it. This is a fact; let us face it.

Now, in a federal Constitution there is a beautiful balance between the Centre and the States, Parliament and State Legislatures. Sarkaria Commission went into great detail about it. If this balance is sought to be upset even to the slightest extent by any measure at any level, there is a hue and cry, and rightly so. Financial powers, centrally sponsored projects, there are lots of matters in which we get nothing but protests from the State governments, and rightly so. But why the State governments did not protest when we told them, “Look, you have not held elections for fifteen or twenty years and sometimes not at all?” They would have protested only if they had done something. The omission was clear; it was established beyond doubt. So, they had nothing to say, when this thing had to be transferred to the Centre. I am mentioning this because more such things can happen in the future and the entire Constitution of India may become an unbalanced document and perhaps unwieldy. You are legislating for the States to some extent. What is the sanction? Suppose there are no elections in a particular State, what are you going to do? Are you going to bring in Article 356? Are you going to say that since this State has not held elections in time, it cannot be run in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution under Article 356? Therefore, the Centre takes over. What is the sanction and what is the remedy? You have to think about these matters, which means that you are in effect converting a federal Constitution into a unitary Constitution willy nilly.

There are many other laws. People are saying ‘put them in the Constitution,’ which means that there will be only one Constitution and no law in this country. So, what are we coming to? The Constitution

is a very sacred document, you should not be tampering with it, adding on to it every two months. Seventy-three times we have amended it. Not that we don't have the right to amend it; we do have the right and the power to amend it and in most cases, maybe in all cases, there was justification. But then there is a limit to everything. I pass a law by Parliament today, it becomes more or less inoperative, is made inoperative and some one comes and tells me 'put it in the Constitution.' Now, what is the guarantee that it will operate then? You want the Constitution also to be made inoperative. This is a dangerous trend. So, please see that the laws passed by the State Legislatures are effectively implemented at the State level. If the laws happen to be vital for the whole nation and in spite of it, the States still don't implement them, there is pressure on the Central Government to bring it into the Constitution and make it mandatory. Now, this trend should stop.

I was not at all happy when we were thinking of making it a part of the Constitution to begin with, but I had no other alternative. Rajivji asked me "what is the alternative? Can you make and ask the States to pass their laws and implement them?" I said no. Since we cannot do it, somebody has to, and that somebody is the Indian Parliament. You have an Article 249 where State legislation is undertaken by the Central Government. It is already there. The framers of the Constitution had envisaged a situation like that but you cannot make Article 249 so operative that it operates every day. It is one of those very very rarely-used things and in fact this has not been used as far as I remember, more than once or twice. So, these very rarely-used provisions should not be made a day-to-day feature. And, therefore, the tiers given in the Constitution, the Centre, the States and the local bodies, all of them should be functioning regularly and efficiently, only then the federal nature of the Constitution, the democratic nature of the Constitution will be preserved. Otherwise, the Constitution will become very much distorted in its content as well as implementation.

The second point which I want you to remember is that there should be some sanctity to the programmes taken up by Panchayats. They should not change according to the party, according to the whims of a person. What are you going to do? This doesn't get any place in

the Constitutional amendment. It depends on how you work it. Please look into this. Please start a convention, that if a sarpanch has started work on one small road decided upon by the Panchayat according to rules, that should not stop halfway if there is a Panchayat election there. Therefore, some kind of guidance, some kind of instruction to the Panchayats, some kind of motivation to the Panchayats on right lines is necessary.

These are the two points which I wanted to raise because these do not concern the letter of law. They concern the spirit of the law, they concern what you understand by this law, what a sarpanch really understands by the new law according to which he has become sarpanch, this has nothing to do with what is contained in the law. Therefore, the letter of the law being understood is equally important, perhaps even more important than the law itself and you have in effect to change a political body into a body which undertakes an economic programme or a developmental programme successfully. Now, you are changing the nature of the body. If it is only elections and one fellow becomes something and the other fellow gets defeated, if that is the only programme, it is okay. But this elected body at the village level has to forget that somebody has been defeated, somebody has been elected. It has to be forgotten because there is a common programme waiting for them to be done by the defeated and the elected person together at the village level. Now, this is a diffused kind of thing at the State level and the Central level. It does matter here also, but not to the extent that it will matter at the village level. So, the democratic discipline of which we have been talking for a long time, which consists in fighting elections but not converting elections into permanent feuds, that is important. If elections are converted into permanent feuds, the first casualty will be the Panchayat itself. Please bear this in mind. We have not touched the villages by the Constitution so far. We are doing it for the first time. Therefore, since we are treading on this live wire, see that it doesn't become counter-productive and result in something which was totally unintended.

Relevance of Non-Violence

THE OPPORTUNITY TO visit this sacred place and pay my tribute to the souls of those who died in the cause of freedom here, has given me much pleasure. As I recall, I was studying in the high school when I read Pandit Nehru's *Autobiography* and found a reference to this place in it. The reason for recalling it is that, Chauri Chaura holds an important place in the history of the Congress, this country and, above all that, in the history of the ideology of non-violence. I do not know if it has found that place of honour but this much, I am sure, that it should receive a place as a central point.

This happened in 1922 when I was only a year old and could not have known about it but I read about it when Panditji wrote of it, in his book and somewhat critically of Mahatma Gandhi. There was a nationwide great agitation and it was so strong that the people felt that the foundations of the British Empire were shaken. One more blow and the British perhaps would have to depart from this land. Why did Gandhiji withdraw such a massive movement simply because something like that should not have happened at an isolated place like Chauri Chaura. There was a big controversy. Those who are older than me and the people of this place who might have taken part in that movement would remember how the people those days had awakened and had stood up for freedom.

However, it was established that, as Mahatma Gandhi was repeatedly emphasising, non-violence is not for the cowardly, not for the weak. If a weakling would say that he was non-violent, it amounts to pretension. The individual who has the strength to commit violence but refrains from resorting to it can only be non-violent. On the other hand, the individual who remains non-violent because he is powerless deserves no praise. Gandhiji talked about the non-violence of the brave for a long time and in the end proved his point. At every stage of our struggle and again and again he proved that you cannot carry on

a non-violent agitation if you do not have the strength and will-power. You are sure to slip up somewhere otherwise and once violence begins the foreign government would be jubilant. Because it was very easy for it to suppress a violent struggle. You are sadly mistaken if you believe that we had some weapons with which we could have confronted the British Government in India. We had nothing by way of weapons. We were totally unarmed. If we had any power it was the power of our will and the urge to sacrifice our lives. Not that we were required to just die but to sacrifice our life for a cause, for an ideal. A person who offers to die for it has tremendous power which you cannot estimate. It is inestimable because life is the biggest thing, the dearest and the most precious to anyone. When an individual is ready to die for a cause, he is beyond compare, he is matchless. Gandhiji raised an army of such determined and active *satyagrahis*, trained them, strengthened their moral fibre by hard work. That was his great achievement.

We now have some leaders who would instigate people, madden them by raising irrelevant issues but the leader would nowhere be in sight when the agitation is to be called off. This is entirely a wrong policy which is in force today, because many of us do not understand what Gandhiji had taught us. Creating terror and disturbing the peace so that a destructive force is generated in society, is not an agitation. In a proper agitation you should have complete control over it and your authority must be respected. Like a railway guard who by a single message or signal can bring a train of a hundred coaches to a stop, not physically, not by standing before the train but by his authority which has to be obeyed. Take the case of an army general who may be seated in some unknown tent but a single message from him can move the army forward or call it back, simply by pressing a button.

A leader is one who has the control in his hands, not the one who has no control over his followers. About the French Revolution, it is said that there was a leader who kept on eating his breakfast while the people were marching outside. He allowed them to go forward hoping to lead them from the rear. This is not leadership. Gandhiji set the right ideal of leadership before us—the leader who leads from the front and has control of the situation. This path was not only for us but for the

entire world. How many such thinkers and philosophers are there in the world who search for the right way to organise humanity? For some time we had the bloc syndrome, the Soviet bloc and the American bloc. They did not fight each other, although they sometimes made the countries fight in between using them as fodder.

The blocs are no more, but what is the ideal way of organising the society? It is good we talk about our democracy, which we have maintained in our country and let us say we are all its offshoots. But can we say that we are going in the direction of a non-violent and free India, as propounded by Gandhiji? How far are we moving in that direction? Non-violence has to be there. Non-violence can have several forms just as violence has. Instigating the people and making them do wrong things is also the work of votaries of violence. If you give a child something which is capable of destruction, the child will not understand what it does and can thus create a disaster without knowing what that thing does. This is also a kind of violence. There are, of course, courses which are full of violence. Violence begets violence and counter-violence thus results. There are some people who carry on their enmities for generations. Two people are locked in a conflict and one of them gets killed. Now if the killing is not avenged in the lifetime of the man who committed the first murder, the son of the victim says, he would not rest until his father's killing is avenged. Then the next generation vows to do the same and in this manner violence and counter-violence in society leave no scope for non-violence.

I am, therefore, happy that a memorial is being established here, which is necessary, but also an institution is being brought into being where some reading and writing will take place and some research work will be carried on. People from all over will come here for that purpose. The whole area around is full of Buddhist influence, where Buddhism grew up and reached fruition. We have only some ancient buildings and monuments today but the Buddhism that is hidden in them should be brought out and its relationship with the teachings of Mahatmaji should be established. There should be some research here on the way, which we in the Indian Government and in India as a nation have shown the world and which is really speaking India's own path.

That research should concern itself with what we can do to create a non-violent society and how the present conditions can be changed by non-violence.

Fifty years hence, nobody will spare a thought for this question. For us, it is like the first feed of mother's milk, our life breath. We have to catch them young and from early childhood, the people have to be taught the message. This has to become part of the individual's nature, it cannot come later in life. Not only in Chauri Chaura but in several other places in India this work of going back to fundamentals of non-violence has to be carried on. It would not do sit back because there is so much violence today. We have a powerful Army and we can face any situation. We can meet force with greater force, and we are proud of it.

Simultaneously, we are to strive, to move towards creating a non-violent society. If there is no peace in our society, the good work done by the Army on the border will dwindle in its significance. We want to create a non-violent and stable society; non-violent, stable, peace-loving and orderly society. Only such a society can make progress and only its work will be of a lasting nature. I, therefore, consider my visit to Chauri Chaura, a purposeful one. I was made to recall what I had read fifty-eight years ago in which Panditji had expressed his restlessness but later he found himself in tune with Gandhiji in what he did as Gandhiji's successor. Some people might say, how was Panditji his successor when there was so much difference between the two. The answer is that even father and son are different from each other. Nobody is a carbon copy of another.

Panditji did whatever he could to give prominence to Gandhiji's thoughts and teachings, to implement them and make the people follow them. At the same time we need someone who can carry forward the thinking and remove the weaknesses in it and adjust it to the needs of the time. An administrator cannot do it nor can the Prime Minister alone can do it. We need someone who will sit in a corner and devote some thought to it. Who is doing it today, I do not know. Possibly some people are thinking about it and I bow to them who can give us

some new thoughts, taking into account the complexities of today. Never before India or the world had to face such complicated situation. We in the country are facing the most complicated situation. It is not easy to find a solution and we need to think about it in depth. We have to analyse the situation and bring the analysed points into a kind of relationship. Both analysis and synthesis are required and after some effort you can arrive at the right or near-right solution. I, therefore, regard this visit of mine to this place as a journey of thinking and it is my appeal to take this process forward.

I am deeply interested in the research centre and the big building that is coming up here. I would continue to take interest in it and would like to know from the freedom fighters and researchers and thinkers, who have seen the world and who can think about the future too, what is proposed to be done. My request to them is that they should straightaway launch themselves in this task since there is not much time to lose before some western values overtake us and we waste fifty years in setting up and running this centre. When the western philosophies first emerged, many of our people thought, that was the highest truth but later we found, it was not so and they were full of defects. But we lose fifty years or so in creating a new institution to counter it.

This should not happen and we have to act with understanding and thought. I have read some American books in which considerable work has been done on non-violence. On the other hand we think, this is our own, a produce of our own garden and there is nothing to be done further by us. Possibly we have also done some work but others have written and thought about a non-violent society and we must also be contributing to it. Since non-violence was conceived here, our contribution should be extremely valuable. We will do whatever we can in making that contribution a reality.

Preserving the Secular Foundation of Indian Polity

I AM GRATEFUL to the Honourable Members who have taken part in this debate. Perhaps this is the third or fourth No-Confidence Motion coming before this House. I do not see any difference between one Motion and another. This time, perhaps one has to look for a few needles in a big haystack. It has been quite a task to do that, but I will try to take up those needles and answer the questions raised, at least those of them, which are genuine, which need an answer.

Evidently, the mover of the Motion only repeated what the CPI (M), the Left parties have been saying. All the time, during the last two years they had nothing else to add, nothing to subtract, except when it comes to practicality. They are very practical people. When it comes to industrialisation in a particular State, the rhetoric changes. I will not blame them, I will not criticise them. I am only bringing to the notice of the House, a few facts which have come to my notice, may be after some time both rhetorics will coincide. We will have to wait for that day but until then, perhaps we will have to live with both.

When we started liberalisation, everyone thought, this is going to throw thousands of people out of employment; there is going to be total unemployment in this country; and what is called 'hire and fire' will become the order of the day. This was at the back of their minds. I do not again blame them because this has happened in many other countries where liberalisation without any stop was introduced. This has not happened in this country. This has not been allowed to happen in this country. I have been saying, time and again, in this House and the other House, everywhere, that liberalisation here has a human face. Whenever there is a human problem, we solve that problem, we take every step to solve that problem and we are not really enamoured of liberalisation for the sake of liberalisation. It is for a certain objective.

All our policies during the last two years have had to follow two tracks. One is liberalisation because that has become necessary, because Indian economy has to integrate itself with world economy. We cannot be an island completely isolated from the world.

Therefore, that integration with world economy needs liberalisation, needs a lot of changes that we had to bring about within record time because nothing piecemeal would do, nothing by degrees would do, nothing by dribblets would do. Therefore, we had to go in a big way on the path of liberalisation. At the same time, we have seen to it that the ill-effects of liberalisation that could be anticipated in advance were forestalled, and effectively forestalled. A sudden jump of four times, 400 per cent in rural development, the outlays on rural development going up to Rs. 30,000 crore in the Eighth Five Year Plan, which perhaps would have been normally reached in the Tenth Five Year Plan, is a case in point. Why was it done? It was done simply because in the programme of liberalisation, there is always the possibility of people being thrown out of employment and that should not happen.

Today, if I may say so with certain amount of pride, the Ministry of Rural Development is the only Ministry in the Government of India, which can spare some money for the poor. No other ministry can do it because all the other ministries are always clamouring for more money. Their programmes are already saturated. Their money is very little or at least insufficient regarding the needs of what they have undertaken. In the Rural Development Programme, I am glad to say, they have had some cushion built into the programme so that the people of the villages do not suffer and they are able to remain where they are. The programmes like the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana are getting much more money from this year. And then this will be the first shield against unemployment, against urbanisation, against people leaving their hearths and homes, going to big cities in search of employment. The outlays have been galloping more or less.

About health, the step up is 68 per cent in the outlay; 37.6 per cent in education; 29.6 per cent in agriculture. Therefore, you have the

activity expanding all the time and this is the only way of ensuring employment, optimum employment, in these areas. Everyone knows that these areas are employment-intensive. We have not done anything which betrays a belief in that trickle down theory. We have said, while liberalisation is taking place, while industrialisation is taking place, and at the macro level industrialisation has to take place, there is no other way and it has to be through other than 'through' means, other than the public sector, along with the public sector if necessary. You have to see that a bypass model is created. You send money straight to the people, not through the trickle but straight to the people. This is the model we have undertaken. I am not sure, this model is available in any other country. This is a totally pragmatic kind of model so far as we have devised it in this country, depending entirely on our own circumstances. How well it is functioning, what more is needed to make it function better—all these things, I am open to suggestions, to criticism on these points.

But the model itself is something, which needs to be looked at and needs to be properly understood in the context in which it has been devised.

We have had a record procurement of 180.3 million tonnes of foodgrains this year. How was it possible? If the village areas, if the rural areas, had not been galvanised, if the farmer had not been galvanised, if he had not been given something which he considers worthwhile from his own economic point of view, this would not have been possible. I can just cite three or four areas. In paddy in 1989-90 the price was Rs. 185 per quintal. Today, it is Rs. 318. The price of coarse cereal has gone up from Rs. 165 to Rs. 260 and that of moong from Rs. 425 to Rs. 700. These are the jumps that the farmer has got and still inflation has not gone up.

There was a great belief that whenever you raise prices of agricultural commodities by two or three rupees, there will be so much of inflation which will just break all records. This has not happened. The inflation from 16.8 per cent or 17 per cent, when this Government took over in 1991, has now come down to 5.4 per cent. In some other

countries, really developing countries, the rate of inflation is something which is unimaginable. You cannot get the same thing for the same price in the evening as it was available in the morning or the afternoon. This galloping rate of inflation has been brought effectively under control and, I think, the Indian farmer, the Indian people, the Government all have to be congratulated for this achievement.

There is unprecedented breakthrough in oilseeds. We were spending about Rs. 2,500 crore—I do not know exactly the figure, but it is in that neighbourhood—on the import of edible oil alone. Today, we do not have to import single drop of edible oil. This again is the achievement of the Indian farmer. Today, he is threatening to do even more than this. They have started palmolein cultivation and we do not know what to do with the enthusiasm of the farmer, because he is coming in a big way and we are afraid—in fact I am afraid—that this increase in oilseeds production may cut into foodgrains production. It is possible.

So, even now we have to think of replanning our crop patterns in such a way that after five years or ten years, before we know what is happening, we do not become deficit in food. This has happened in many other countries. They get food from other countries. But they grow so many cash crops in their own countries and they say that it is worth it, because they are getting more on agriculture. So, that kind of a thing should not happen to a country with 880 million people because, no other country will be able to feed us if we go down in the production of foodgrains.

The New Agricultural Policy which we have adopted is not a traditional policy. It is not following the line which agriculture has been following in this country, either as subsistence agriculture or agriculture meant for a particular section of society.

This agriculture is much more than what was happening plus something much more. The objectives are, to step up support to infrastructural development, to build an economic climate for farmers' investment, and efforts through a favourable price and trade regime in

agricultural products. It is no longer the agriculture of five years ago or ten years ago where keeping prices down was considered an end in itself and keeping the farmer only in a marginal sense, just keeping the body and soul together, was considered to be a very high achievement in economic planning. Sectors like research, irrigation, power, transport, roads, market, storage and processing will receive priority. Infrastructural support to rain-fed agriculture has become one of the weakest spots, but now we are really improving this. In ICRISAT in Hyderabad, and in other places where research is going on, I have seen myself that the whole outlook of dryland farming is being transformed. This is a very good augury for the country and after five years we will see that we have made so much of progress in dryland agriculture and perhaps it would be surprising to ourselves.

Generating value added exportable surpluses is also one of the most important things. Farmers in this country are taking full advantage of it, except that it is not as highly developed as it should be, and I think, in the years to come we are going to develop it.

The cooperative movement would be freed from State controls and supported on the strength of their being truly cooperative ventures. However, Government would continue to provide financial and extension support to cooperatives in areas where the cooperative movement is weak or is yet to take root.

These are some of the objectives of the New Agricultural Policy and it can be very clearly seen how it is different, how this Policy is going to be different, how the outlook of the farmer is going to be different, how the future of the farmer is going to be different in the years to come.

Some criticism of the Fertilizer Policy was made. Now, I would like to humbly suggest that we have taken the most beneficial policy on fertilizers. Suddenly we found that the fertilizer, particularly DAP produced in this country, became two or three thousand rupees per tonne costlier than what we are getting by imports. It is true that the factories raised a hue and cry because they were losing money by our

import, they could not compete with the imported price. What we did was, we took full advantage of the lower import price. Today, for the first time in this country, we can say that we have enough DAP for the complete year, we don't have to go in for further import. What we have imported is enough for the whole year and our farmers can be best assured that they are going to get it at the imported price and, even in that, we have given them subsidy of Rs. 1000/- a tonne and therefore, so far as agriculture is concerned, the anxiety that we had in 1990 and 1991 is at an end. Meanwhile, as Atalji pointed out, what is happening to the factories? They have had to shut down. Can they ever open? My answer is, they have shut down and they have also opened because we have given a package of facilities to them, concessions to them, by which they became viable or they are on the way to becoming viable. In order to enable domestic industry to survive, Government has announced a scheme of refund of customs duty paid on capital goods and also a concession of three per cent in interest on term loan, which is a very big chunk of concession, for new fertilizer plants commissioned after 1st January 1991.

Also, in order to enable the domestic phosphatic industry to sell at prices compatible with imports, the Government has recently announced a concession of Rs. 1,000/- per tonne on indigenous DAP and proportionate concession in respect of indigenous complex fertilizers and S.S.P. during the current kharif season. No such concession is available on imported DAP and complex fertilizers. These incentives have enabled five units, which had shut down—Coromandel Fertilizers, Madras Fertilizers, Paradeep Phosphates, G.S.F.C., and Mangalore Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited—to resume production. I think, there are still two factories, which have not fully resumed production, but they are well on the way to resuming of production. This is what has been done in agriculture.

There are large number of rural artisans, only next to the agricultural labour, and the handloom weavers. The Honourable Members might know the plight of the handloom weavers. For years and years they have been almost starving. That is the situation there. Now, for the first time, we have taken up some linkages with rural development.

Nobody bothered about rural development in the case of handloom weavers, although most of them live in the villages. The Ministry of Textiles has finalised, in consultation with the Ministry of Rural Development—this is what I was referring to: when you have Rs. 30,000 crore in a Ministry in the Plan, you can certainly spare some money for programmes which never had anything to do with the rural development programmes in the past—four new schemes for coverage of the handloom weavers under the ongoing schemes of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), TRYSEM, Indira Awas Yojana and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. And this has been done for the first time. These people were never looked at. Even when these programmes were taken up, not a single weaver ever got a house built under Indira Awas Yojana and all these were totally unavailable to them. Today, we have made these available to them with the result that enormous benefits will go to them along with their other brethren living in the villages. We have, for the first time, recognised that this is a very important section of rural people, whose needs for employment, for habitation and everything are as much as those of the others. So, coverage of loomless handloom weavers under the IRDP, coverage of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes houseless handloom weavers under JRY, training of handloom weavers under TRYSEM, setting up of Common Facility Centres (CFCs) for the handloom weavers with JRY assistance—under these four schemes 3.27 lakh loomless weavers will be provided with looms, work sheds and working capital in a phased manner in three years, or so. These are the schemes which are being introduced from this year for the first time.

Then, I come to khadi, another very important area of activity in the villages. We are committed to the development and upgradation of khadi and village industries. These industries also have been suffering, languishing for a long time. A few months back, three or four months back, a very influential delegation of leaders in the khadi field—they have been working for decades and decades, they have given all their life to khadi and village industries, these colleagues, friends of ours—came and told me about the plight of the khadi workers and the industry in general. So, a high-powered committee under my Chairmanship has been set up to review the potentialities and programmes

for this sector within a period of three months. I also happened to be a very humble khadi worker in my area. So, they said, “you are one of us, so you must be the Chairman.” I have accepted it.

Within three months, we are going into all the details about what the khadi and village industries are ailing from and what could be done by the Government, by organisations and by the khadi institutions themselves. This is what we have done for the khadi sector.

I am sure, the Finance Minister gave full details about the economy, how it has functioned, how it has behaved during the last two years including the foreign exchange reserves etc. I only have to add here just one point. Foreign equity investment approved up to 21-7-1993 amounted to 3.2 billion US dollars. This involves over 1100 cases. The foreign equity thus brought in will be supplemented by Indian equity and borrowings, both in India and abroad. The total expenditure on the project involved would be around Rs. 60,000 crore. Now in two years if the investment has reached Rs. 60,000 crore, whereas in the public sector, we were not able to go beyond one lakh crore over all these years, we can see how quick has been the investment rate. Naturally, all these investments will not fructify in a day or in a year. It will take some time but it will fructify because it has come from people who know what they are going to do; they know that investment in India is profitable. Only after getting convinced of this, they have come here.

The power projects alone will make available additional capacity of 4,000 MWs. The refineries proposed to be established will be of 41 million tonnes refining capacity per annum. Most of these investments are in the infrastructural, most essential sectors, contrary to the beliefs and contrary to the disinformation spread sometime back that these are all cosmetic and so on. It is not so.

Now I come to the most important aspect of national life, which is today the achievement of harmony within the society, the lack of which has been dodging us for some time and from which we have to come out as a nation. If this is not done, then the nation will have no

future. That goes without saying. We have already seen people who cannot really be stable—one or two years of stability and then we do something with stability so that it gets broken; gets disrupted. This is the kind of reputation which we seem to be earning. We will have to come out of it. We will have to live it down by whatever means possible. That is why I have been appealing time and again to all parties, all sections of people, that this is the time for development, this is the time to keep our heads cool for the next three years, five years. If this country would do nothing except development, then perhaps after that time, probably this country would be a giant in every respect. This has been said by many economists, many people who have some idea of the shape of things to come. But somehow, we seem to be sinking back into the old ways and that is what we have to come out of.

In this session, we are introducing two Bills for amendment of the Constitution and for amendment of the Representation of the People's Act, 1951 with a view to curb the use of religion in politics. Now we want religion; we want politics. We want both. Both have their very important place in this country. But a mix of the two has no place in this country. The mix of the two is going to be disastrous. I am saying this to all parties. Religion cannot be a trump card of any party, any political party for all time to come, for one election, two elections, yes. But people will see through it.

And then the effects of this will be so bad that we will not be able to recover from the disaster for a long time to come. It is not meant to be against one community or another community. It is meant to bring back the political ethos, the country's ethos, back to what it was and what it should be.

In this connection, I would like to quote from a recent judgement of the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court of India has recently observed—it is a beautiful passage and I would like to quote it:- “Our Constitution-makers intended to set up a secular, democratic republic. Our political history made it particularly necessary that the basis of religion, race,

caste, community, culture, freedom and language which could generate powerful emotions, depriving people of their powers of national action should not be permitted to be exploited lest the imperative conditions for preservation of democratic freedoms were disturbed. Sections 123 (2) and (3) and (3A) were enacted to eliminate process appeals to those divisive forces like religion, caste, etc., which arouse irrational passions. The crux of the matter is that the electoral process is a national process. It cannot be allowed to slip into the irrational channels. Condemnation of electoral campaigns on lines of religion, caste, etc is necessarily implicit in the language of Section 123.”

This is the passage from one of the Supreme Court judgements and it is based on this that these two laws are being introduced. We must go into them in great detail. We will discuss them and we will have to pass them. We will pass them because they will really determine the political life of this country hereafter. We have not been able to do it because there was an aberration for the last three or four or five years. That aberration has to be removed lock, stock and barrel and then it has to go back to the secular foundation of the Indian polity.

Two drafts, one for the Temple Trust and the other for the Mosque Trust, are deeds for the perpetual lease of the land, and have been prepared in consultation with the Ministry of Law. The list of persons who may be considered or who may come forward to man the Trusts, according to information available, has been prepared. It could undergo lot of changes. There is nothing final about it. But ultimately the Trust has to be created by Government and I would invite suggestions from Honourable Members on this matter.

What Atalji said about electoral reforms, I was very deeply impressed. So much effort has gone into this. But, perhaps, it has stopped in the middle. And, I think, the time has come when we have to take it up again. In 1990 after taking all these into account, all the proposals of the Chief Election Commissioner, the proposals contained in the RP (Amendment) Bill, 1990 and Constitution 70th (Amendment) Bill, 1990, the Government is considering to bring forward a comprehensive package in electoral reforms. So, we are

taking up the process where it was left in 1990. I have discussed this with the Ministry of Law, etc. It is proposed to seek the views of leaders of various political parties on these proposals, as we have always done in matters like this. Some of the important proposals under consideration include:

- Measures to discourage non-serious candidates;
- Restriction on contesting election from more than one constituency;
- State funding of the elections;
- Restoration of pre-1975 position regarding automatic disqualification in case of a person found guilty of a corrupt practice;
- Introduction of multi-purpose identity cards;
- Expenditure incurred by a political party on the election of a candidate to be treated as part of his election expenditure, whoever incurs it;
- Fixing six months' time-limit for holding by-elections;
- Ban on donation by companies to political parties; and
- Provision for an independent secretariat for the Election Commission.

These are some of the salient points on which we have to take decisions after due deliberations. This is the position in regard to electoral reforms.

Another point which was raised, quite a pertinent point, was about the Lok Pal. After the introduction of the Lok Pal Bill in Lok Sabha on 29.12.1989, Government considered various suggestions for amendment, penal provisions relating to the publication of proceedings were toned down and some other changes were made. Subsequently, in August 1990, Government decided to have a fresh look at the Bill, with reference to the following points. One is, whether the definition of a complaint to the Lok Pal should be modified to cover not only corruption but also abuse of position for gaining or causing harm or hardship or maladministration; whether the definition of a public functionary should be enlarged to cover also officers of the level of Joint Secretary and above in the Government of India as well as chief executives of Central PSUs. A view was taken, and this is important

how it dropped there, in September 1990 that no change was required. There were detailed consultations between the Department of Personnel, the C.V.C. and some key ministries on the question of bringing the CEOs and PSUs within the scope of the Bill. But, no decision in favour of their inclusion was taken by the time the Bill lapsed. Now, meanwhile, during the last one year, Government have been making very thorough exercises in examining the possibility of an Ombudsman in our country. Now, Ombudsman's scope is much wider and perhaps, it may be worthwhile to consider whether this Ombudsman's office should be established here by law, by Act of Parliament. I have sent one or two officers to several other countries where Ombudsman's office exists and there are differences between the countries. I have got a full report from each country and one of these days, I would like to have consultations with the party leaders, and whichever way they think it should be done, we will take it up.

There is another point in regard to consultation with State governments in the case of restructuring or closure of industries by voluntary retirement, retrenchment, etc. in the case of voluntary retirement, there is a scheme of voluntary retirement; that we will know about; but that is between the employer and the employee; probably the Central Government or the State government, neither of them figures necessarily. But in the case of retrenchment, I understand that at present under Chapter 5(b) of the Industrial Disputes Act, the appropriate Government's—State or Central Government as the case may be—whenever workers are to be laid off, prior permission is needed. Thus, except in the case of undertakings in respect of which Chapter 5(b) of the Industrial Disputes Act is the Central Government, consultation is always done with the State government and the authorisation is given by the State government. Now in this, perhaps there is some idea that even in the case of Central establishment, when they are located in a particular State, if any action on these lines is to be taken, it may be a good idea—because it is being done already, I am told—to regularly at least consult the State government, so that whatever is the result, both the Central Government and the State governments have the chance to think about it and come to some conclusion. We will certainly look into this; this is a constructive idea.

We had the Bodoland problem; we solved it. We had this Karbi Anglong problem in Assam; we have solved it. In Darjeeling we had a problem; we have solved it. So there is no point in pushing it under the carpet. This is not going to be good. So, we have taken certain steps. They have not yet fructified; I know. They have not fructified for various reasons. When it is said that both the parties—the Leader of the Opposition and the Chief Minister—are hand in hand against the demand, it can be easily surmised that these matters cut across party lines.

— That is precisely the reason that the Central Government has to be extra careful in dealing with these matters so that by our own haste, we do not add to the problem.

I would like to say that the Government is fully serious about this problem. To charge the Government with non-seriousness, I am afraid, is not correct. We have been discussing this for months because every small thing has to be gone into, even the name; name became a bone of contention, and for quite valid reasons. So, I would like to point out that this is not an easy matter for some one to write and everybody else to accept. This is not accepted so easily. Therefore, we have taken a lot of steps, many steps. The Government has sent the suggestion to be incorporated in the Bill which was sent to us by the Bihar Government. They sent a Bill for a Council to the Centre. We found that it was not adequate. We thought that some more areas and some more things have to be put in that in order to at least partly meet the aspirations of those people from Jharkhand. Therefore, this is under discussion. It is at a delicate stage. This is the time when no passions should be aroused, either on this side or that side. I am sorry to say that right now something like this is happening in Bihar. It should not happen, I will talk to the Chief Minister myself, I will take up with the Bihar Government; the Home Ministry will take it up. We will not allow it to get out of hand and we will see that at the earliest, whatever has been agreed—in fact, there has been some modicum of agreement on a particular pattern—that agreement with whatever changes or whatever changes agreed to by both sides, all sides, will be brought about.

Under Article 339, a commission has to be set up every ten years for the review of tribal development and administration. This is the Constitutional provision. It is a pity that we had only one commission. And after that, we have not appointed the second commission. A number of Members have raised this. They suggested that it is time that we have the second commission. I have made a note of this suggestion. We will certainly examine this.

Measures for welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, especially with regard to the reservations in private and public, and multinational corporations in view of the new Economic Policy—this is again an extremely important point. But right now, as the law stands, as the Constitution stands, it is not possible for me to give any commitment. All I can say is, we can put our heads together and find a way to this, how we can cope with this new situation in the new context. We will do it.

The Quit India Spirit Once Again

THE YEAR-LONG celebrations to mark the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the historic Quit India Movement of 1942 are drawing to a close. For a year we have held celebrations all over the country to honour the heroes who fought in this great Movement for the country's independence, many of whom are no longer with us. I would like to place on record my gratitude to and appreciation of all those who have contributed to the success of these functions all over the country and revived vivid memories of the Movement

Speech in the Central Hall of Parliament to mark the conclusion of celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Quit India Movement, New Delhi, 9 August 1993

The Quit India Movement was, in many respects, the culmination of the freedom struggle of India against British rule. The ground for this Movement had been well prepared by Mahatma Gandhi through earlier movements, notably the Khilafat Movement, the Non-Cooperation Movement and the Civil Disobedience Movement. These movements inculcated a high degree of political consciousness among the people, they steeled them to face the rigors of a non-violent movement against the entrenched might of the strongest imperialist power of the world at that time. They were by now well-versed in *Satyagraha*. The message of Congress had been carried to every nook and corner of the country and the people were ready for the final thrust in the fight for freedom. They no longer feared the atrocities of the rulers. They had with them Gandhiji's shield of *Ahimsa* and the *Mantra* of 'do or die'.

The Congress Party's determination to launch the Quit India Movement came when it realised that the British were not serious about giving India independence but nevertheless wanted to draw India into the World War against the Axis-powers. The British claimed that it was a war between freedom and fascism; but this was freedom not for India but for the British. Indian leaders declared firmly that India's participation in the war effort was contingent upon India herself being free. But here was a case where a slave was being asked to fight for the freedom of his master. India demanded her equal right and a right which is based on participation of both as sovereign, independent nation and not as master and slave. It was the most reasonable demand.

The All India Congress Committee which met on 7th and 8th of August at Bombay for its historic session approved the Quit India Resolution. It said, "The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines and on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilise all the non-violent struggle it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken."

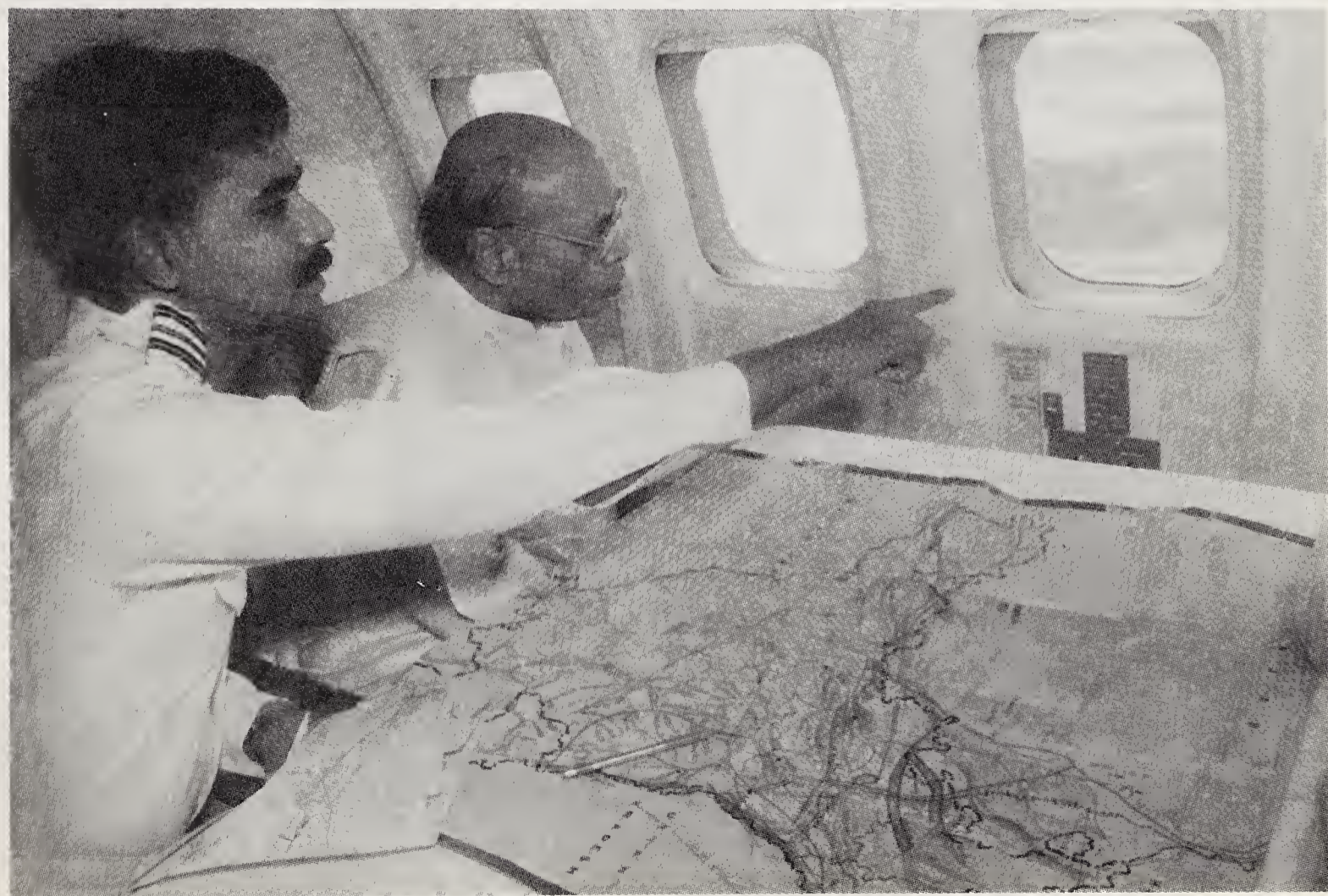
Gandhiji's speech after the passing of this Resolution lasted 140 minutes. It was one of the longest speeches he ever made. He said, "I want freedom immediately, this very night before dawn, if it can be had. The Congress must win freedom or be wiped out in the effort, and forget not that the freedom which Congress is struggling to achieve will not be for the Congressmen alone but for all the 40 crores of the Indian people"—I repeat, "40 crores of Indian people"—"everyone of us should consider from this moment onwards a free man or woman and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heels of this imperialism."

Today, it is difficult to comprehend the kind of national fervour and zeal that motivated the people of India at that time. They did not seek any personal gain or office. They were armed with nothing but their faith in *Ahimsa* and *Satyagraha* which was Mahatma Gandhi's unique contribution to the oppressed people of the world. Mahatma Gandhi said, "A non-violent soldier of freedom will covet nothing for himself. He fights only for the freedom of his country. The power that it gives will belong to the people of India and it will be for them to decide to whom it should be entrusted." Such high principles of equality and freedom have always permeated our national policy whether in internal or external affairs. What India deems right for itself, it willingly concedes as being right for all. India has never believed in special privileges or discriminatory treatment, whether within the country or outside.

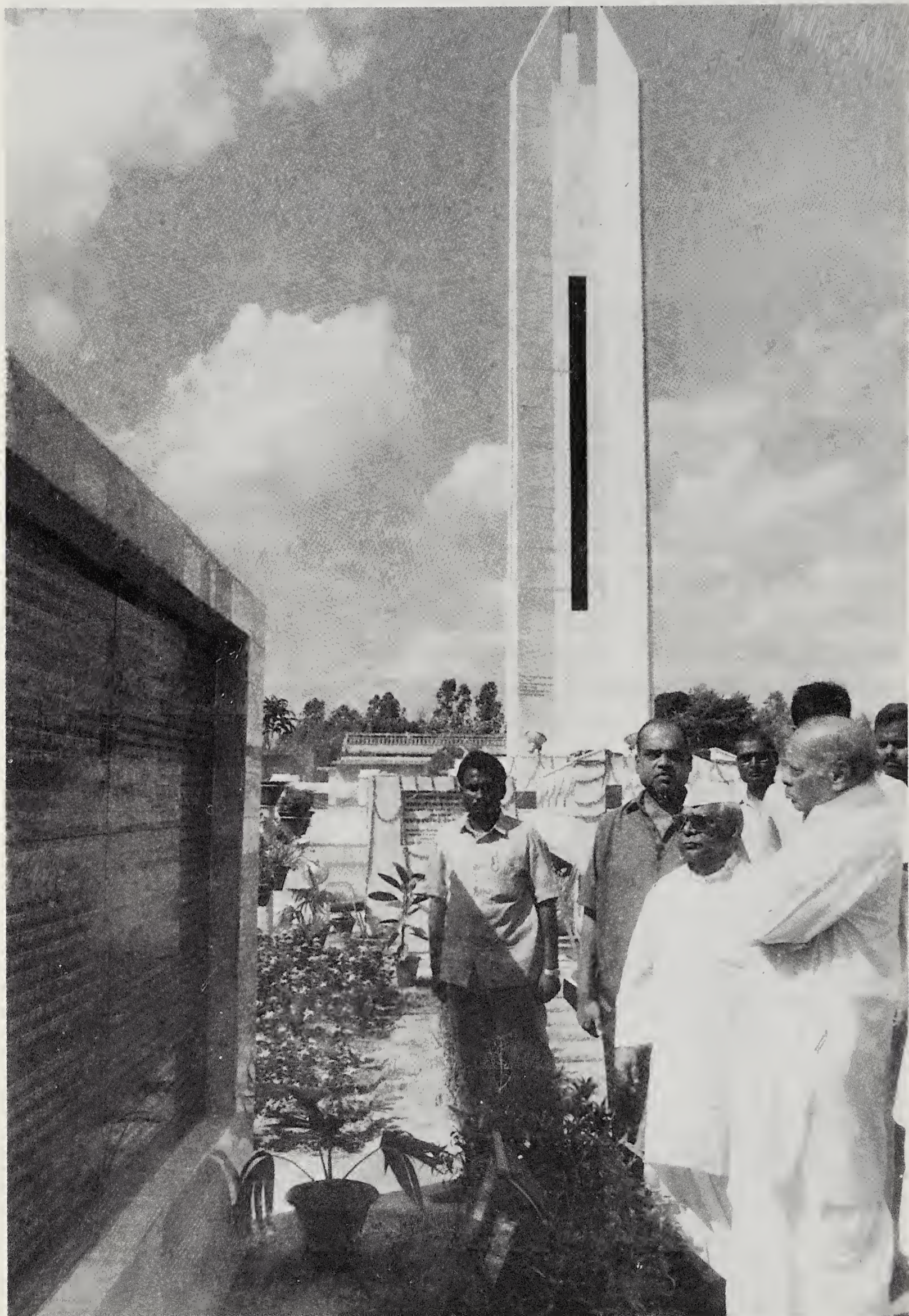
We have now come 51 years from those heady days of selfless service and patriotism. Sacrifice and self-discipline, which won us freedom, are equally necessary today to preserve it and make it meaningful for all our citizens. A smooth and coordinated functioning of the various organs of government and institutions of the society needs functioning within its ambit and according to the procedures laid down, for it is essential for the success of democracy. A pluralistic democracy has by definition a multiplicity of such organisations. They can work together only when each works within its own prescribed parameters. Mixing roles, overstepping jurisdictions, and usurping functions and powers are recipe for anarchy.



*At the conference of State Panchayat Ministers & Secretaries,
New Delhi, 3 July 1993*



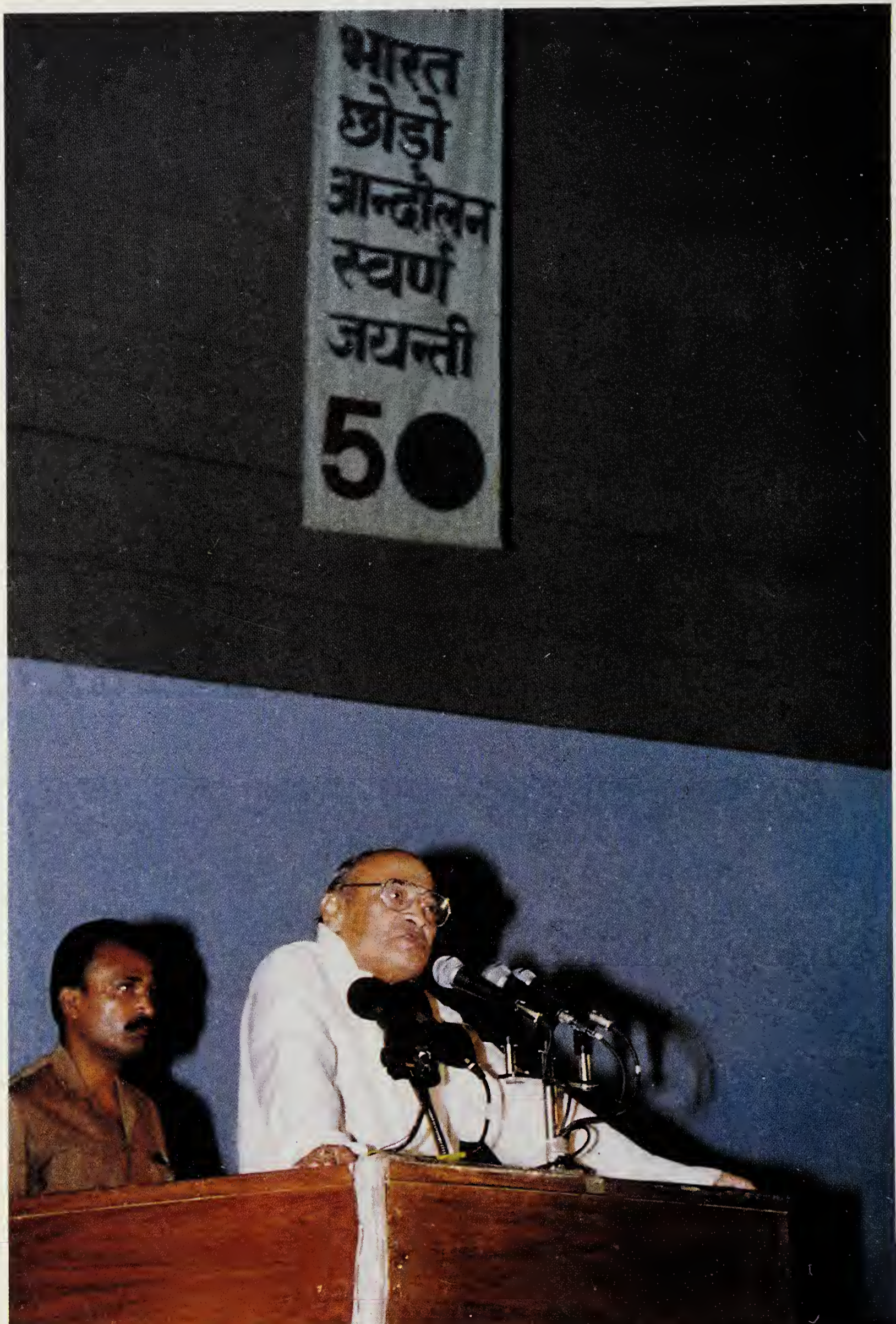
*Aerial survey of the flood-affected areas of Punjab and
Haryana, 16 July 1993*



*Dedicating Chauri Chaura Martyr's Memorial to the nation,
Gorakhpur, 19 July 1993*



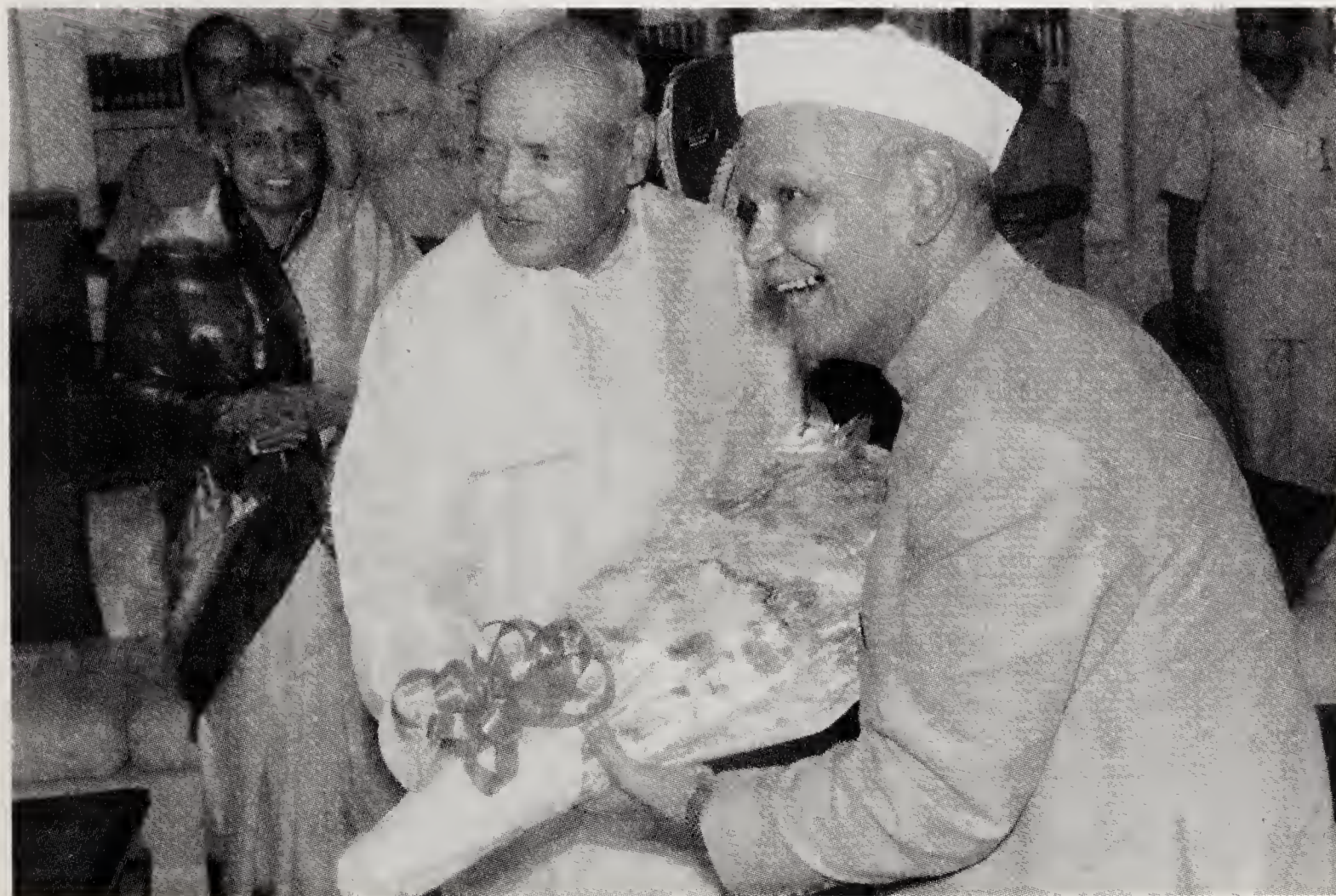
*At the meeting of the Planning Commission, New Delhi,
23 July 1993*



*Addressing the concluding function of the 50th anniversary
of Quit India Movement, New Delhi, 9 August 1993*



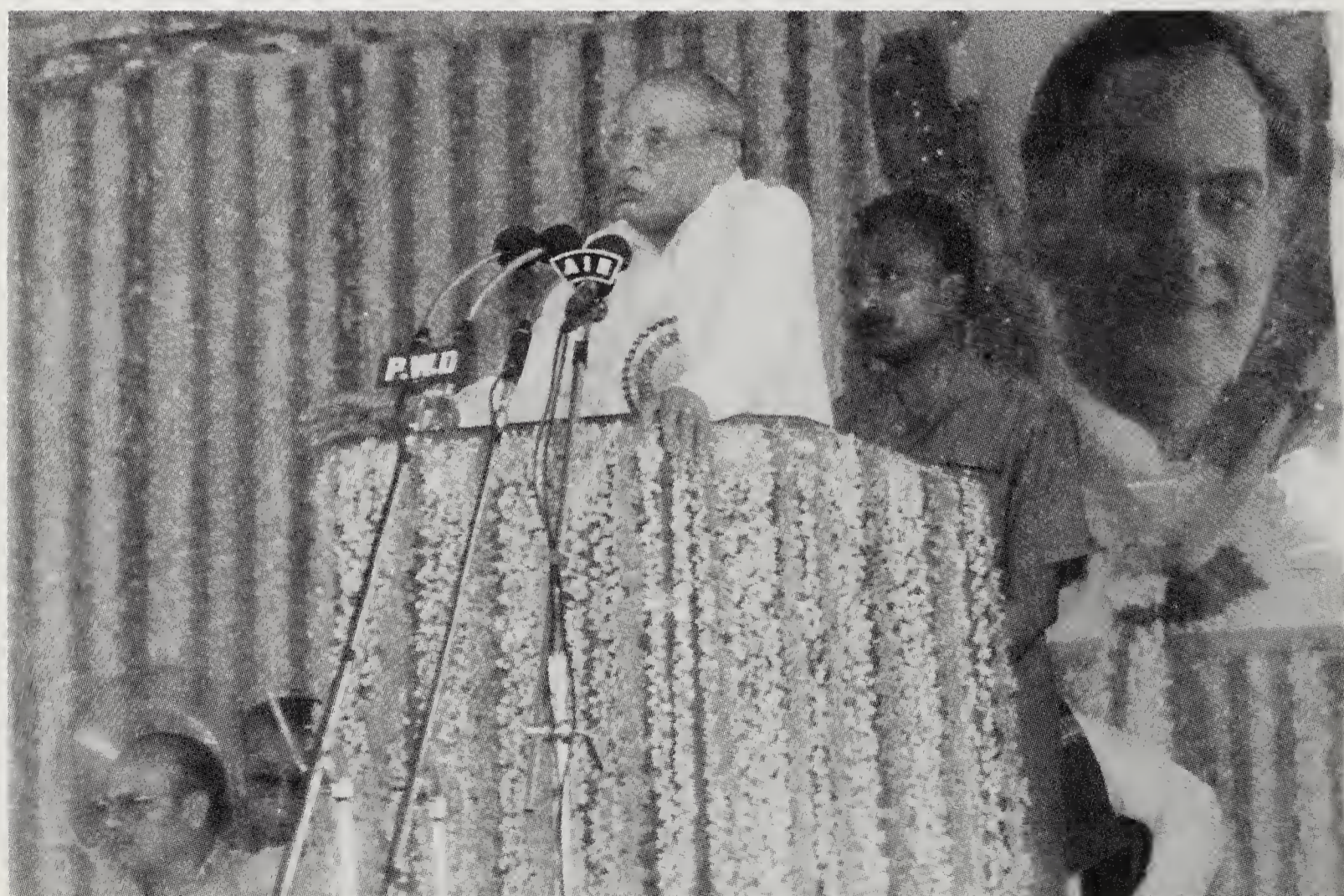
*Addressing the nation from the ramparts of Red Fort on
Independence Day, 15 August 1993*



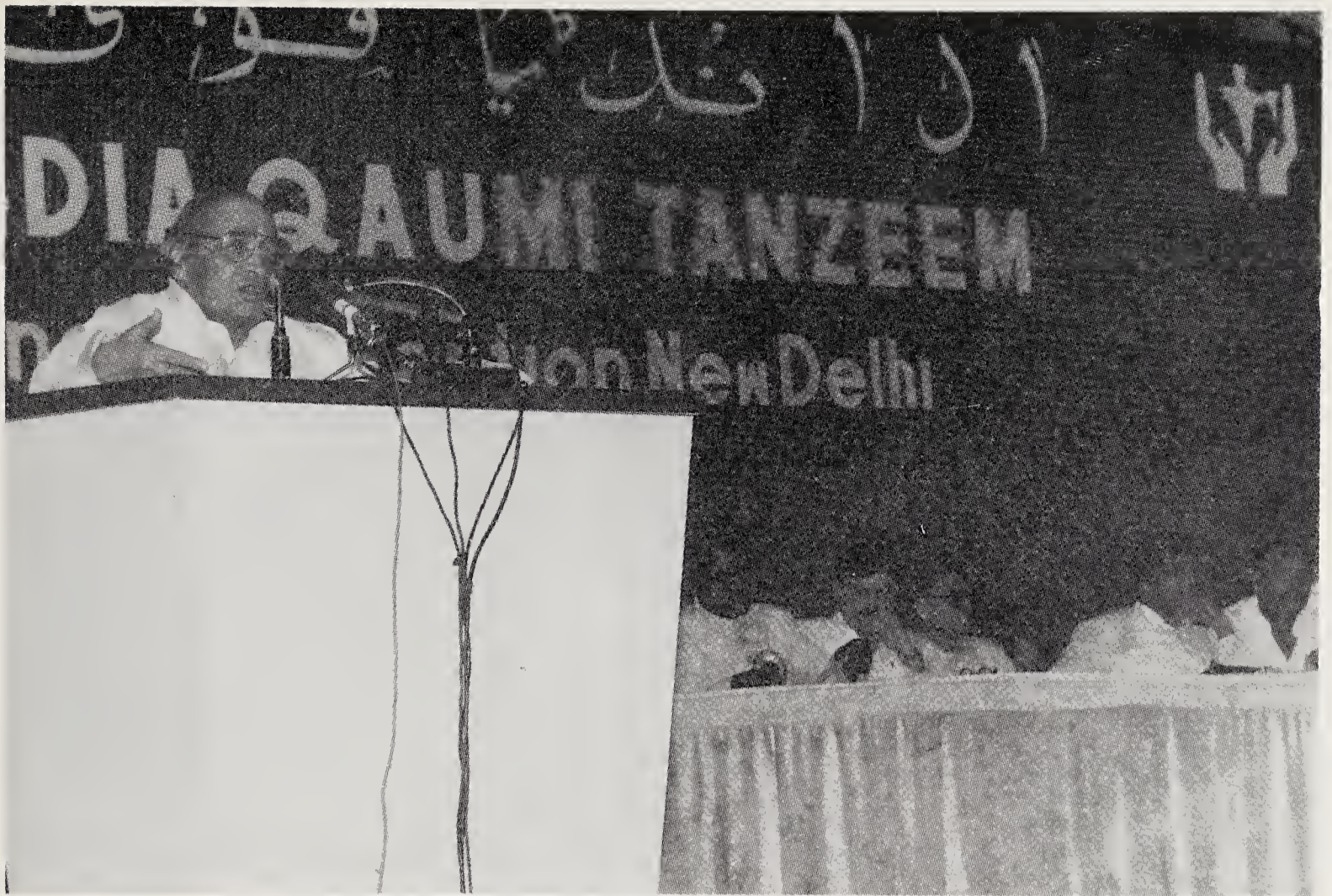
*Greeting the President, Dr Shanker Dayal Sharma on his 75th
birthday, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi, 19 August 1993*



*With Rajiv Gandhi National Quality Award winners,
New Delhi, 20 August 1993*



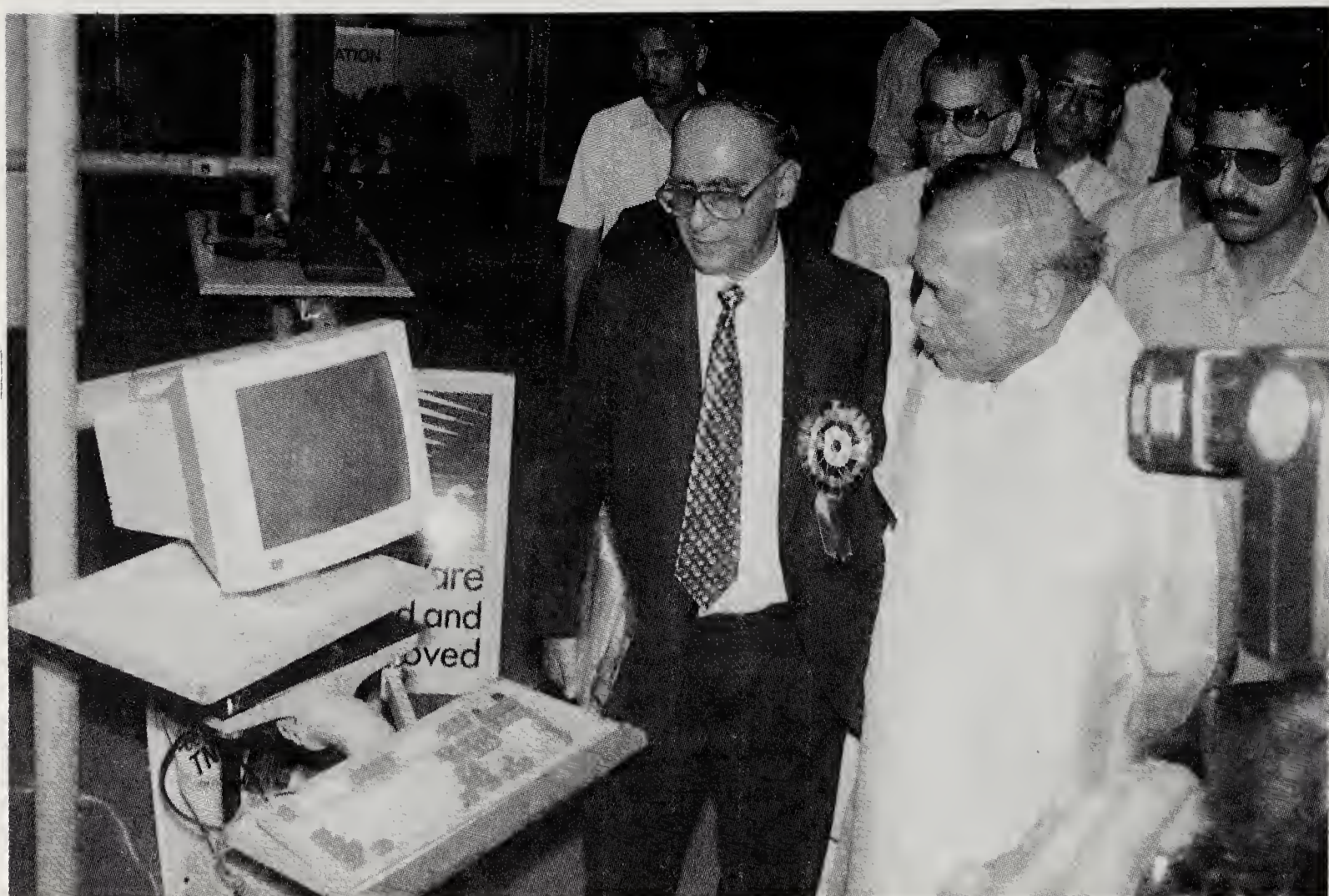
*Addressing at the foundation-stone laying ceremony of Rajiv
Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development,
Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, 1 September 1993*



*Addressing All India Qaumi Tanzeem conference, New Delhi,
2 September 1993*



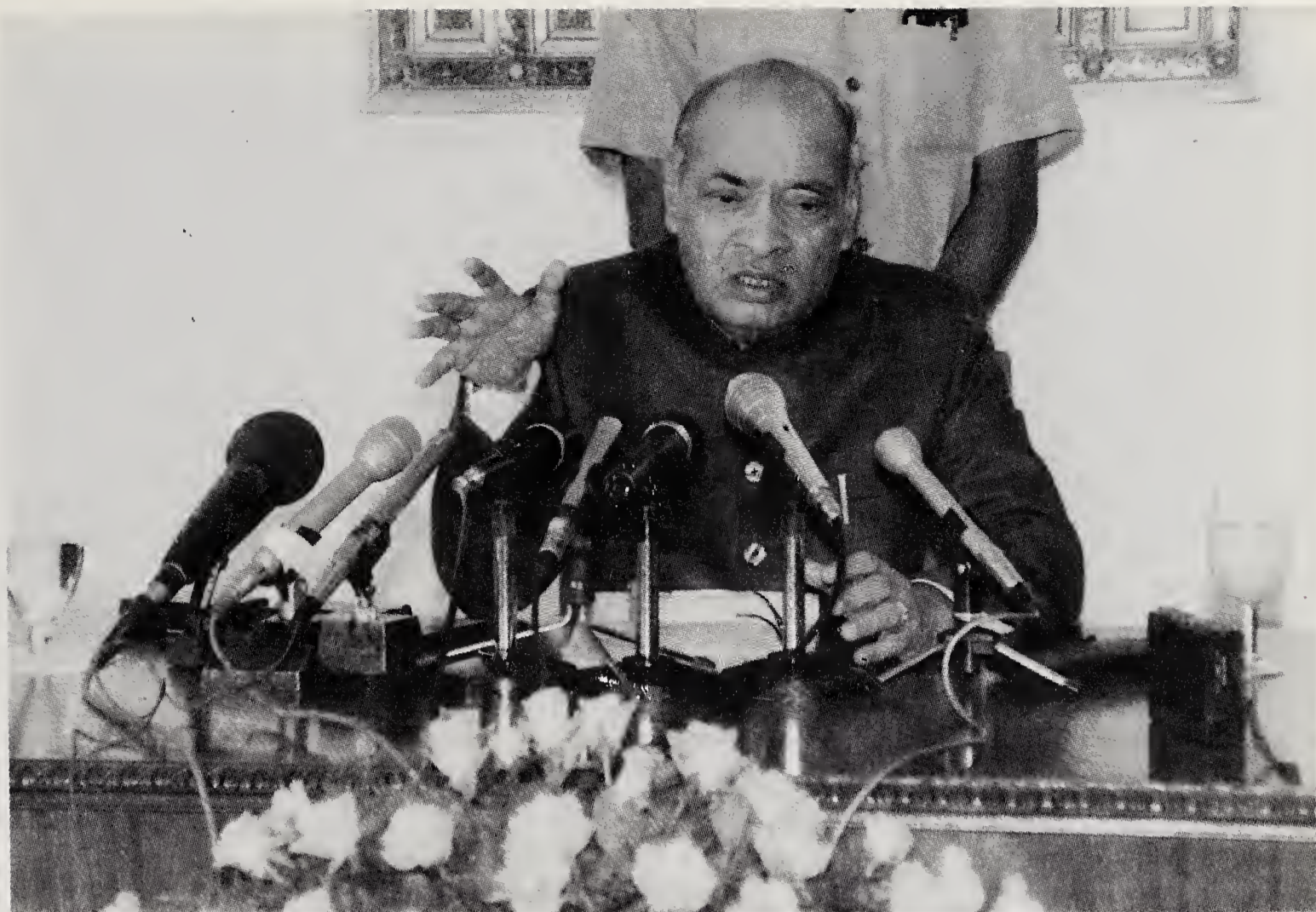
*Donating on the occasion of Flag Day, New Delhi,
14 September 1993*



*Going round the IT-ASIA '93 exhibition, New Delhi,
16 September 1993*



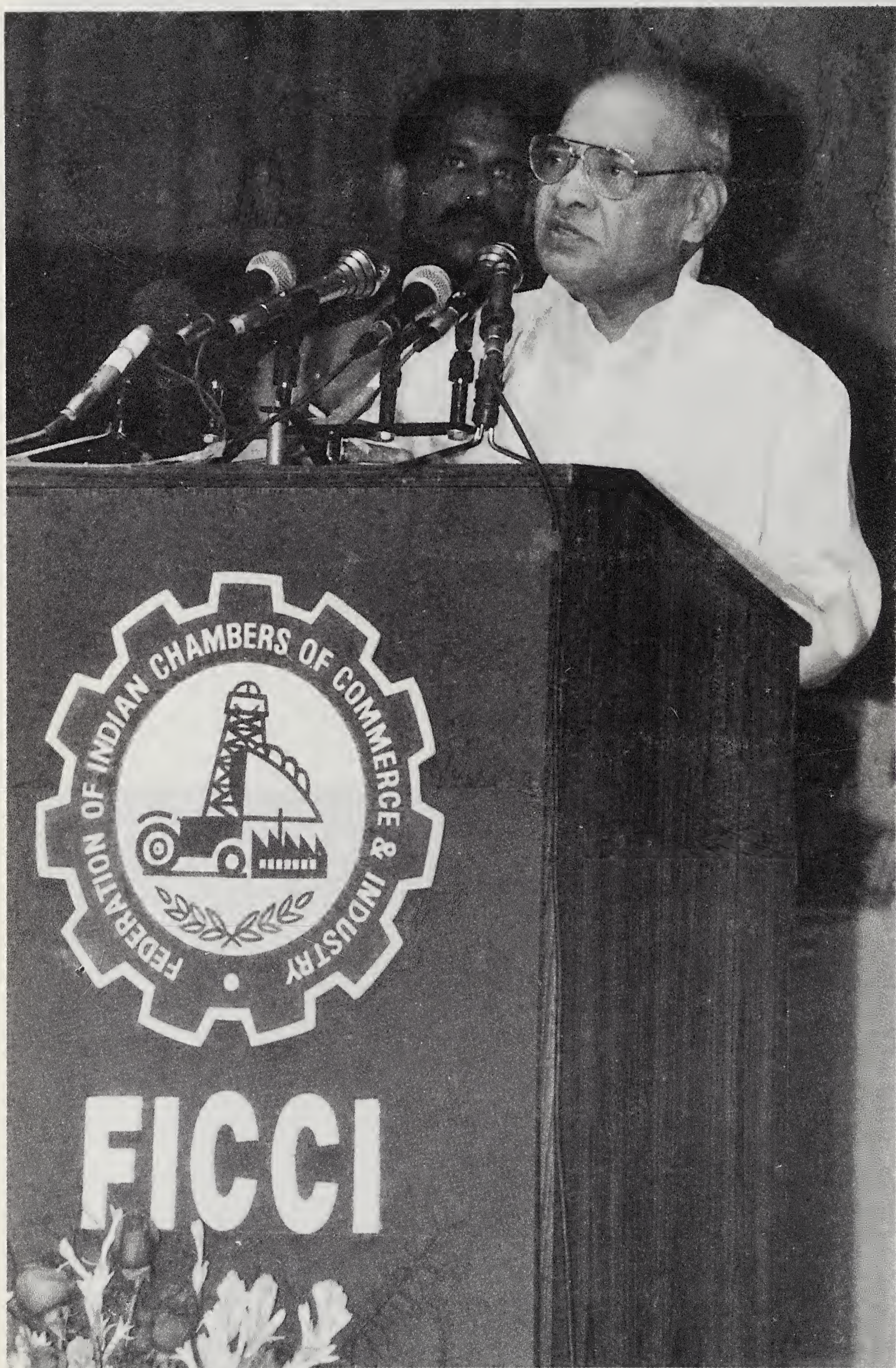
*Addressing the National Development Council meeting,
New Delhi, 18 September 1993*



Addressing a Press conference, New Delhi, 22 September 1993



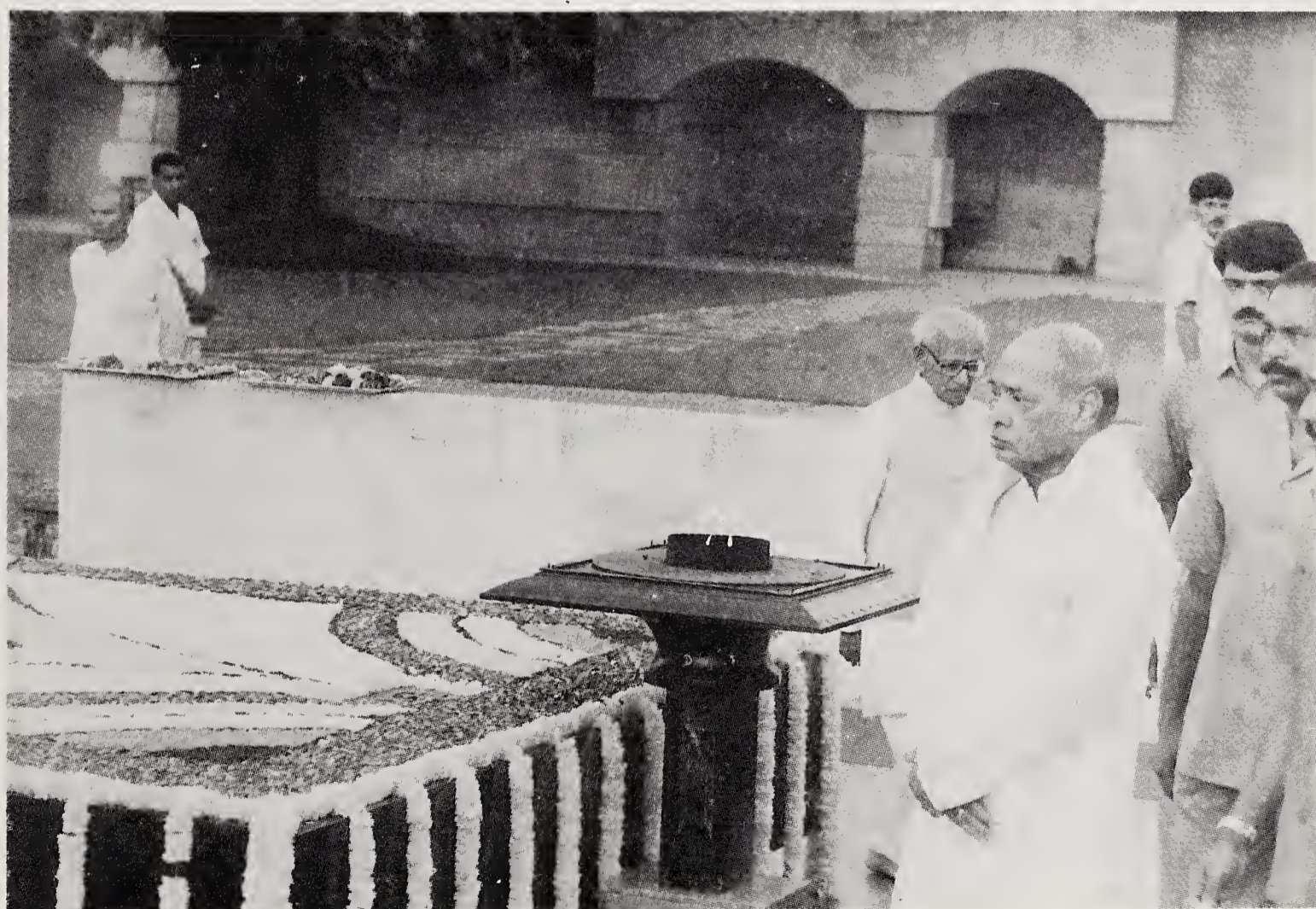
*Being presented with a stone, brought from Antarctica by the
members of the 12th Antarctica Expedition, New Delhi,
24 September 1993*



*Addressing the 66th annual session of FICCI, New Delhi,
28 September 1993*



*Giving away Coal India's Awards of Excellence, 1992-93,
New Delhi, 30 September 1993*



*Paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi on his 124th birth
anniversary at Rajghat, Delhi, 2 October 1993*



*Going round the earthquake-affected areas of Latur
& Osmanabad of Maharashtra, 4 October 1993*



*Inaugurating the Centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda's
participation in Chicago Parliament of Religions,
New Delhi, 9 October 1993*



*Broadcasting a message on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee
of the formation of Azad Hind Government by Netaji,
New Delhi, 20 October 1993*



*Inaugurating India International Trade Fair, New Delhi,
14 November 1993*



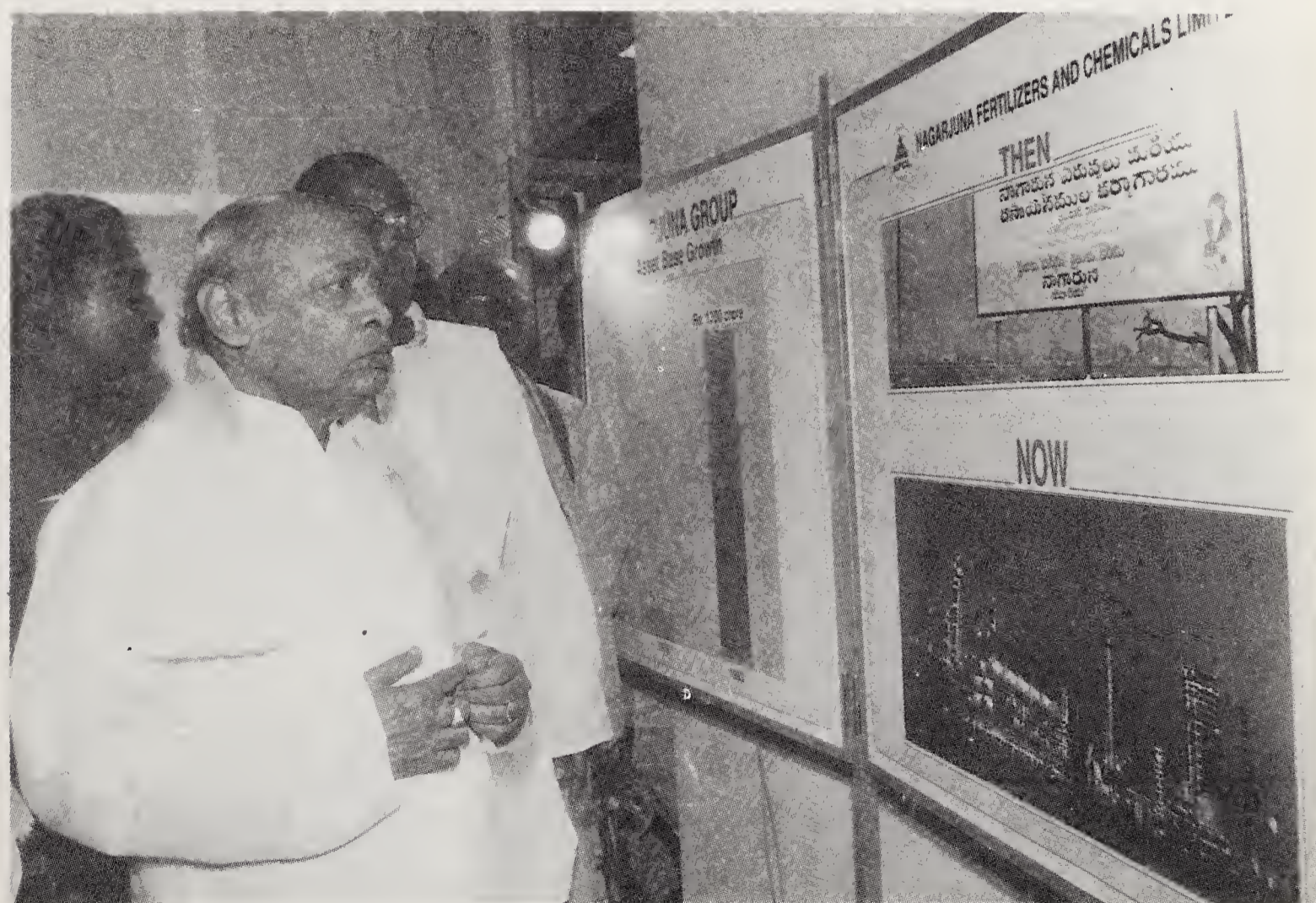
*Going round an exhibition on Role of Women in India's Development,
New Delhi, 14 November 1993*



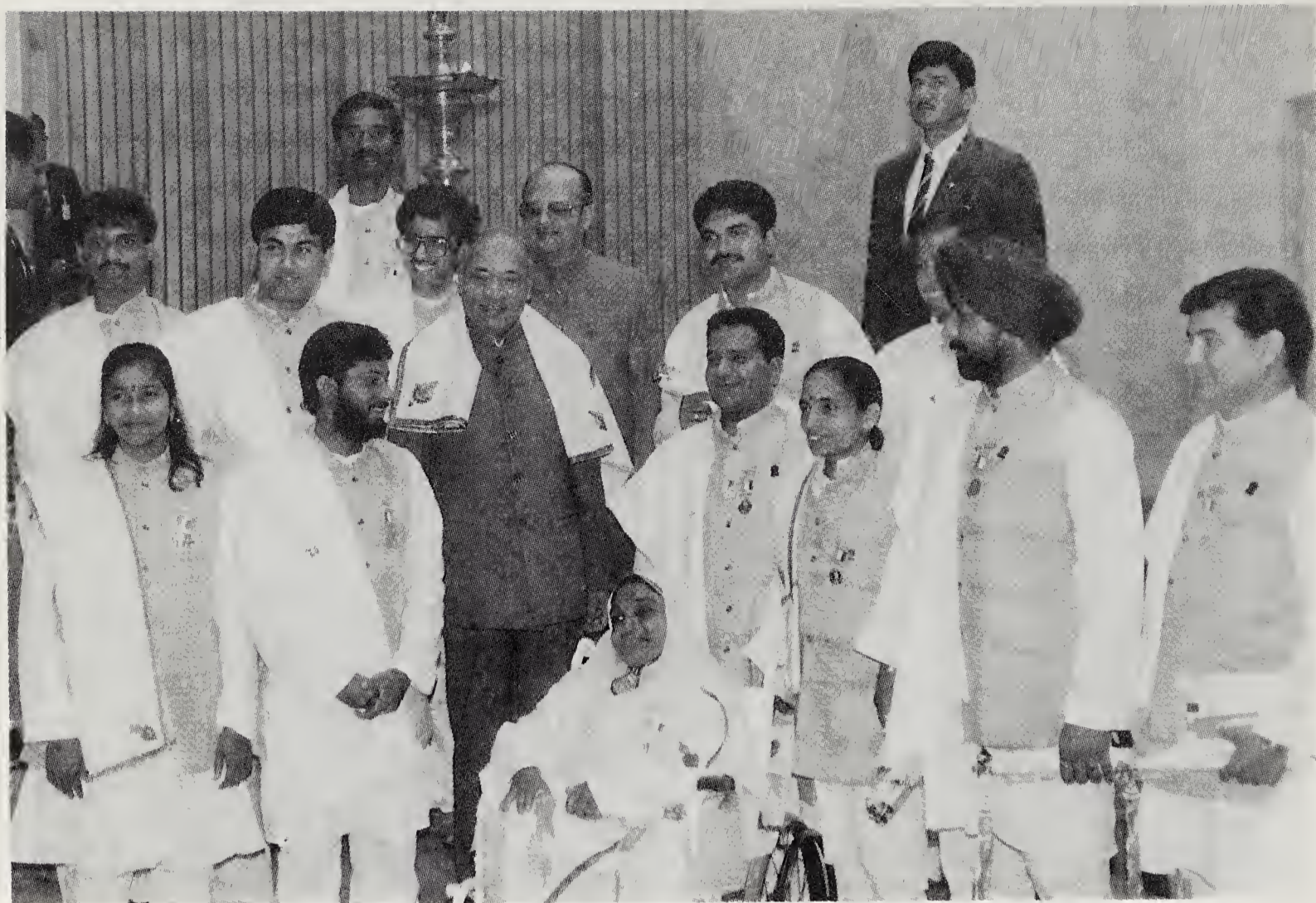
*Addressing the Education for All Summit, New Delhi,
16 December 1993*



*Inaugurating the 81st Indian Science Congress, Jaipur,
3 January 1994*



*Going round the Nagarjuna Fertilizer and Chemical Plant,
Kakinada, 8 January 1994*



*With the awardees of National Youth Awards, New Delhi,
12 January 1994*



*Inaugurating the sixth Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar,
New Delhi, 17 January 1994*

The Quit India Resolution had several dimensions—political, economic, international etc.—against the backdrop of an imposed war effort contrary to the will of the people. It took freedom as the spring board of all voluntary national action including participating in a war for democracy and freedom which can never be successful while it is accompanied by the suppression of democracy and freedom within the country.

The Resolution also mentions the main postulates of independent India, namely, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, the pooling of world's resources for the common good of all. This is obviously a comprehensive world-view whose domestic component came to be incorporated in the Indian Constitution as secularism and social justice. The Quit India Resolution could, thus, be clearly seen as one of the source documents of our Constitution.

The Quit India Movement showed to us that our country has the mettle and the moral fibre to work together against the mightiest of forces. The Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Quit India Movement are over but the spirit rekindled should never be allowed to droop or the confidence wane. This must, and shall be, our endeavour hereafter.

A Great Occasion

EXACTLY ONE YEAR ago, on August 9, we had started a year long celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of Quit India Movement. Today we are bringing it to a close.

During this year, the celebrations touched distant corners of India. The new generation which did not know much of the Movement except little what they read in the books, gained more information and awareness from the celebrations. The people felt that those chapters of history which cannot be seen again must at least be narrated for information sake. The events of those days should be ingrained into the minds of the people and we should make all out efforts in arousing enthusiasm and national feeling of the order which an independent country should have. A year long celebrations proved very rewarding in this big programme. I feel happy for this.

Let us look back for a while. How did it happen? During our student days, we had a feeling that the British rule would perhaps continue for long. Somehow or the other everyone had started feeling like this. How is it that within five years of Quit India Movement, the events moved so rapidly and we became independent.

In those days a number of persons commented, wrote articles in the newspapers and gave speeches to the effect that India's independence came by surprise. Some even said for the sake of criticism that India got independence too soon and she was not prepared for it. These were the comments of those who did not like to see India independent. I still remember how bitter were the comments of those people but I clarify that this independence was not sudden. It came in a gradual manner similar to a building which is laid brick by brick. The Congress movement turned into a mass movement only when Mahatma Gandhi returned from Africa.

While the mass movement was gaining strength, the First World War broke out and the same question which was posed in 1942 appeared to the fore. Whose War is this? Whether it is being waged by the people of slave countries like India or is it being waged by those desirous to enslave India? This invited great debate. A number of Congressmen had said, "this is not our war; we should not participate in it. This will strengthen the British Empire even more and our position will aggravate further."

Gandhiji was the first person to raise his voice against this thinking and said that the reality was something else. He added that we should cooperate with the Government in fighting the great War even if it means extending support to imperialism. After that we will fight our own war. Whatever we want to achieve out of it, we will achieve it.

A rosy picture was presented before us. Many promises were made including one, that we would get what we wished immediately after the end of the War. As such we had no reason to worry about. There was no reason to doubt their intentions either and you know how many lakhs of youngmen shed their blood, sacrificed their lives in that War; and how many places they went to fight that War and even today in the history of war, it is written that the Indian jawan is second to none in bravery and sacrifice. They are second to none in even staking their lives for the noble cause. If you allow me to say, they are perhaps at the top in this. Such is the Indian soldier.

What was the outcome of these sacrifices; nothing, except that the Government resorted to false pretexts and went back on its promises. When the demand for self rule picked up further, they then indulged in repression. The country was cheated, betrayed and solemn promises were not fulfilled.

A number of missions came to India but they were just an eyewash. They were not here to solve the problem. Most probably, they never thought that there would be a Second World War. But in fact it did break out. In the meantime Gandhiji had prepared the country for struggle.

When the Second World War broke out, we were faced with the same question which appeared at the time of Ramgarh Congress and that was, what it should do? We were deceived once. A rosy picture too was painted before us once. The question staring in face was whether we should allow ourselves to be deceived again. Gandhiji affirmed that it should not be tolerated and we would never allow the foreign race to deceive us once again.

I knew even then some of our friends who wanted to help the British Government, were from students' unions. There were some who said, "Is it the proper time to betray the Government. Is this the time of going against the Government when the British are busy in fighting against the mighty forces of fascism. We have to render help to the Government in this War too."

Gandhiji, Panditji and all others said that this is not the reality. If you want to fight against fascism, if you want to fight for independence of the enslaved countries then how could you expect us to support you while ourselves remaining in bondage. First give us freedom or at least instil confidence in us by declaring that you would grant independence to us. If this kind of assurance is given that we would be freed immediately after this War, then we could think in terms of cooperating with you.

But the British Government was not even prepared to give that assurance. Despite reverses after reverses it was not prepared to relent its stronghold over India. Viewing against this backdrop that its intentions are not good, the Congress had to take a decision, Mahatma Gandhi had to take a decision to launch the agitation of the sort that it could not be suppressed come what may. He wanted to make it a country-wide movement in which people were not given any option for thinking. He said that either this Movement would yield possible success to us or we would die. There was no middle path for us. We have to choose either of the two options. Gandhiji knew already that all those who would be involved in the Movement, would be arrested one day. No one doubted that having got such resolution passed, those who passed the resolution and those who were instrumental in getting

it passed won't be spared. Gandhiji had thought about it. He said, "If we are not there to help you or guide you then each one of you should consider yourself a leader. Each one of you should own a responsibility for a cause, your duty was to carry on the struggle at the risk of your life. You should not retrace your steps come what may." It was in this spirit that the Movement was carried.

We too, who were students then, participated in it. We faced lots of difficulties but did not give in. After a gap of five years we became independent. It was not an immediate gain. On one pretext or the other, the British Government delayed the independence by resorting to repressive measures. Those who were the students and participated in the Movement could not pursue their studies, had to leave it midway and suffered heavily.

The British Government indulged in suppression of every sort and thought that the Congress would not have its trace as it had no office, no place to meet and no meetings could be held as there was no leader to address them. Except Rajagopalachariji, there was no leader outside the jail. The jails—small and big were all filled with Congressmen. Rajagopalachariji was released and allowed to remain outside because he had followed a different path, other than the one followed by other Congressmen. With the majority of the Congressmen lodged in jails, there was no one to keep the Congress flag flying. People had started believing that the Congress has been wiped out. There was no trace of it. But the spirit of enthusiasm generated by the August Movement continued to inspire people. When Sardar Patel and Pandit Nehru were released from Ahmednagar Jail, the first slogan they raised was, "We have had enough of you. Please go away, please go away." Gandhiji repeatedly told the British Government, "You say that once you leave the country there will be anarchy. Please go away. Leave us in anarchy. For God's sake leave us to our fate. Do not stay here."

After this challenge, the British realised that they could stay for a year or two at the most by their repressive policy but they could not stay for ever. The foundations of the British Empire had been weakened. It was just a matter of time for its downfall. It was

impressed upon them that it would be better, in their interest to leave the country than wait and see to be thrown out later. Considering this, the British started negotiations.

It is a different history, a different chapter of it that after they had decided to leave, the country was partitioned into two. But what it signifies is that the 1942 Movement remained the decisive Movement in our freedom struggle.

People of three districts had declared themselves independent. Even Gandhiji said that now every man and woman of India should consider himself or herself independent. People had to move ahead with a feeling that there was no such thing like British Government to control them. If you think that you were still slaves then you won't be able to do anything. The people of three districts, Ballia in U.P., Midnapore in West Bengal and Satara in Maharashtra and those inhabitants of the small pockets elsewhere in the country claimed that they were independent. They said that they would not part with anything and would run their own government. They proved it also that they could run their own government. The picture of an independent India and dream of its forging ahead could easily be based on the 1942 Movement. However it is a different story that everything later went in disarray. But it exemplifies the great spirit, feelings and zeal of the people. It also proves their determination.

Just now Chavanji and Chandra Shekharji said, "Why do we talk of these things now?" We do that for our future, to lead this country on the path, which Gandhiji had once trodden on and one, which had been trodden by our country during the last 5000 years. The country never belonged to a particular group or class. We do not favour a particular religion or class. We consider the whole world as our family. We want everyone to be happy, not the Hindus or Muslims in particular.

This is the picture of India. This is our goal and ideal and for realising this we have to take inspiration from the August Movement.

The Congress had visualised this future of India in its resolution of August 9, 1942. The resolution was very brief but what it contained later formed the part of our Constitution. They talked of secularism but did not use the word as such which said that the minorities should get full protection, backward classes and backward areas should get full facilities and support. We should make special efforts for their progress. Whatever ideals we had set in our Constitution found the clear mention in the resolution of 1942 Movement. It meant that the Congress did not want to remain complacent or sit quiet after achieving its ideal. It had the clear picture of future India the mention of which was made in the resolution.

The delineation of the ideal in the revolution proves that our country has all along been an ideal one. We never suffered from want of vision. I do not talk of present day but for thousands of years we had one or the other ideals before us and all those were unquestionably the lofty ideals. The ideals which were handed down to us by our ancestors, saints, sages, thinkers manifest before us in one form or the other. They are manifested in the form of maxims or books.

Today, they manifest in the form of programmes which we have now. These programmes are sometimes successful and sometimes not. They may be faulty. There is a need to rectify them. Everyone knows that mistakes do occur. For the last 40 years we have been committing mistakes but these mistakes have been committed while undertaking good tasks. The man commits mistakes but what needs to be underlined is that the task is not bad but good instead. One who cannot differentiate between the two does not understand India, does not understand the society, does not understand our Government.

Whatever the powers that be present today are despicably engaged in splitting the country or society into two, three or four parts. But it is not a new thing. This we should acknowledge.

India is such a big nation. Other nations have been divided even into 12 or 15 parts. But it is a consolation that India still remains united. Its unity and integrity has never been in question. We quarrel among

ourselves, say harsh words to each other but that goes into oblivion if we remain united. There can be no two opinions about India's unity and integrity. The significant thing is that no one doubts it. In 20 or 50 years when our history would be written the most notable achievement worth mentioning would be India's unity. While everywhere in the world, the countries are disintegrating, India has maintained its unity though many efforts were made to disintegrate it.

So my appeal to gentlemen, veteran freedom fighters is that whatever great sacrifices were made by you in building India, that India have come true. It stands before you. You are very fortunate to have that opportunity to witness it. There were many who were older than us and had towering personalities. Their achievements were comparatively great. But they could not see independence. Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Krishna Gokhale could not see independent India. Our generation is very fortunate. We did take little part in the freedom movement, we saw the independence coming true we are now engaged in consolidating that freedom though the efforts for it may go away here and there. Such generation will never come again. It is a very fortunate generation. We should carry the torch of freedom forward.

The future generation should not have only academic and bookish knowledge and information of the August Movement—information they must have but to realise this we should make stupendous efforts.

I hear the same expression being repeated today that India belongs to Hindus, and they alone would rule here and none else would be allowed to join the mainstream. What is mainstream? Is it to think of entire humanity as one or is it to divide the entire country into smaller units? Why is this hollow slogan then? India's mainstream is that it considers the entire humanity as one.

Panditji had a dream of world government. Every one of us dreams of world order. May be to some extent it will be realised. But we must know fully well that the new programmes adopted in the country are based on equality of all and not to discriminate one another. We must treat every one as equal however difficult it might be. I do not think that there will be any problem in its implementation.

I have taken much of your time. I wish to thank all of you that you came here for the finale of the celebrations and blessed us. We take a pledge before you that we will safeguard the independence of India for which you fought and finally earned it. We will see to it that whether here or anywhere else in the world no one brings bad name to India's freedom. India's Flag will keep on flying with pride and India will assuredly forge ahead.

Soldiers—the Pride of the Nation

SENTINELS OF INDIA'S freedom, Army officers and brave Jawans, I extend to you my heart-felt greetings on the eve of 47th Independence Day. Our countrymen are proud of you for the vigilance and alertness with which you have been guarding the country after independence. The whole nation is conscious that our borders are fully secured because of your might and watchful eyes.

It is obvious that some foreign hand is behind the recent violence in the country and the recent happenings in Kashmir. Such violent activities may be construed as a conspiracy to weaken the country. We should be cautious of such activities. Under these circumstances it is essential for us to keep a constant vigil on our borders and be ready to deal with the dangerous forces in the country. While on the one hand we should be ready to face the foreign aggression, on the other hand, we should remain watchful of the evil designs of such forces in the country. The officers and Jawans are keeping a constant vigil on our borders and I am proud that our soldiers are doing wonderful job not

only in the snow-clad areas of Siachen but are also rendering a great service in the dense forests of North-East and thereby helping in the defence of the country.

It is a matter of pride for all of us that they have set a record by doing a marvellous work in maintaining internal peace and against the disruptive activities.

I am happy to say that our armed forces are a living example of unity in diversity. The soldiers who have come from distant corners of the country are the epitome of secularism and national unity. They are not only the representatives of different regions in India but also are the ambassadors of the country in the world. They have created an indelible impression of brotherhood, goodwill and discipline in distant areas of Cambodia.

Similarly our Navy is engaged in rescue work in Somalia. Now our soldiers will have to work there with the soldiers of other countries. I am confident that there also they will add to the glory of India.

Our soldiers have full faith in human rights. Wherever they are posted they will set an example to the world by ensuring that these are not violated. I would like our soldiers to prove by their conduct that they are firm, truthful and courteous. Our soldiers are known for these qualities the world over and my advice to them is that they should prove an example of our ancient culture and heritage.

Since the last Independence Day, there have been many changes in the world. The defence environment has undergone a considerable change after the disintegration of one of the big powers. Though the great powers have made many efforts to put a ban on the proliferation of nuclear weapons and discourage the mad rush for stockpiling of armaments yet these efforts have not proved of much help in fostering peace in the world.

As regards India, its policy has always been to work for peace and goodwill. We have always endeavoured to solve the mutual

differences through negotiations. This policy of peace has yielded results—our relations with all the countries have been strengthened. But even now the foreign trained terrorists are sneaking into our country equipped with arms. It is imperative to solve this problem.

We are keeping a strict watch on the military preparedness of our neighbour and our armed forces are fully equipped to defend the country and repulse the invasion. Our armed forces have not only established the high standards of military prowess in the battlefield but have also come up to the challenges of internal security and have earned a name for themselves.

Take for an example of cattle-rearing. Our Army has scaled the pinnacle of success in the field. Our Directorate of Military Farms has developed new varieties of cattle which have the potentiality to increase milk production many times. These Military Farms are encouraging milk production in such areas where there is no milk production at present.

Likewise our armed forces have created new records in the field of adventure. The officers of the Air Force and armed forces have set a living example of courage last year by rescuing the passengers trapped in Cable Car in Himachal Pradesh. Recently the good work done by the divers of the Navy for clearing the obstacles caused in the river Sutlej by landslides in Himachal Pradesh, was commendable. The armed forces have rendered a yeoman's job in safeguarding the lives and properties of people during the recent heavy floods and natural calamities in many parts of the country last year.

During riots, the armed forces have rendered a great help to the civil administration in protecting the countrymen. Coast Guards, Territorial Army, Border Road Organisation, NCC and Inter Services Organisation have worked admirably in their respective fields. The Border Road Organisation is engaged in construction and maintenance of roads in inaccessible border areas while the Coast Guards are engaged in safeguarding the long coastal line. They are, indeed, doing very difficult tasks. The NCC cadets are upholding the tradition of

national unity, secularism and discipline in a remarkable manner. The armed forces have set up new records in adventure sports such as yatching, mountaineering and trekking. In the field of sports too, the achievements of all the three wings of our armed forces have always been significant.

The Government is well aware of the problems and the requirements of the retired army personnel. After independence, several schemes have been launched for their welfare. The Government has been endeavouring from time to time to give them financial help and provide facilities for their rehabilitation. The retired army personnel too are reaping benefits of these Government schemes. In future also the Government is determined to take care of the interests of these personnel.

The standard of our armed forces is very high and their achievements are innumerable not only in India but also in the world. They are the custodians of our independence. I extend my hearty congratulations to them and express my best wishes. On this occasion, I hope that our armed forces will do even better and bring further laurels to the country in the coming years.

Unity and Stability for Sustained Growth

I GREET YOU all on the occasion of the 46th anniversary of our Independence Day and, on this auspicious occasion, I congratulate you and extend to you my hearty felicitations.

As you know, we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the Quit India Movement, a few days ago. This Movement was the most

decisive part of our struggle for independence and within five years of this Movement we achieved our independence. Many freedom fighters who made great sacrifices for the freedom, are fortunately with us and many of them are no more. We are grateful to all of them. The nation will never forget them and their names will be there in the history of India for ever.

Today, on 15th August, we are making a new beginning in the technological field. Till now, Doordarshan had only two channels. But from today, you will have six channels on Doordarshan. This is no small achievement. At the most one or two channels could have been added but our scientists have performed a miracle in space. The INSAT-2B satellite designed and fabricated by our scientists has been stationed in the geocentric orbit and it is working quite perfectly. Consequently, from today you have got six channels and gradually you will have more channels on the Doordarshan. This satellite is one of the examples of our self-reliance in the realm of science and technology.

Here I would also like to tell you something that relates to our national resolve. We needed an engine called cryogenic engine for the satellite. There is no difficulty in buying the engine but some difficulty is there in the transfer of technology. There are many reasons behind it but there is no need to go into them now. We were to get this technology from Russia but now there is a question mark on it. Then, what do we do? Should we give up our programme? Definitely not. We have decided and our scientists have assured us that within two years they will develop the same technology indigenously and after that there would be no difficulty in designing, manufacturing and launching such satellites. The scientists have asked for two years time and till then we can purchase these engines and our satellite programme would continue without any hindrance.

This day is very memorable for us. On this day we take stock of situation, dwell on our past and think of future. Let us look at the achievements of the Government and people of India during the last two years. I would like to tell you briefly. It is not that you do not know about them but still I would like to recall them. First let us have a look at our economy. You have to make a comparison of the present state

of economy with the one which this Government inherited from the previous Governments. The extent of progress we have made in two years is a miracle in itself. This proves that our economic system was good, the infrastructure was basically sound, but because it was distorted for one or two years, it went haywire. After this, we started mending it and it recovered quickly. Therefore, there is no need to be pessimistic. The foundation of this economic system, laid by our leaders during the last forty years, is still very strong and it could steadily move forward only if the system is allowed to grow without any obstruction or attempt at distorting it.

You must have been reading about the inflation, which has today come down to 5 per cent from 17 per cent within less than two years. What does it mean? It means that fluctuations in prices as prevailed in some other countries do not exist in our country and it shall never be so. Prices have been controlled in a manner that whatever fluctuations there may be, it would always be within our control. You must have noticed that increase or decrease in prices in a year have remained confined within a small range and have never gone beyond it. This is an indication of the strength of our economy.

Today, you have to take one more thing into consideration. It is the amount of money that we received as deposits from outside. You may ask what was the need for it. This is required because we need foreign exchange. We have to import kerosene, fertilizers, machinery and we need foreign exchange to bring all these from abroad.

When this Government came to power, we had only about 2000 to 2400 crore rupees in foreign exchange reserve. It was going to be exhausted within a week. I am happy to state that today, we have Rs. 21000 crore, i.e., 7 billion dollars. Today, if you have to import from anywhere, you would have no problem. Our foreign exchange position is very good. It is in such conditions that we are able to march forward with self-confidence and we are forging ahead.

The growth of the economy is also satisfactory. And the trade balance, i.e. how much we export and how much we import is very

important. If you import too much from outside, your foreign exchange reserves would deplete and get exhausted, but when you export more and import less, there will be a favourable balance between the two. I am very happy to say that for the first time in the history of free India, we have achieved the trade balance. Earlier we used to import more and export less. Now, both of these have come to an equal level and, for the first time, we have a very comfortable position. So we will not be required to touch the foreign exchange reserves that we have. The money we get from our exports shall be used for imports and this will keep up the trade balance.

Whatever programmes we have taken up, are mostly for the poor. Today, a comment, an irresponsible comment, is made that all the programmes formulated by this Government are for the rich. Nothing can be farther from the truth. In fact, all our programmes are for the poor. We have made enormous increase in the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and rural development. If we look at this year's budget, the increase in allocations for the programmes for rural development, education and health and many other schemes which directly benefit the poor and the rural population, no one can say that these programmes are for the affluent section of the society only.

Of course, I must say, for industrialisation we don't have adequate resources. Ours is a poor country and the preceding Governments made it poorer. Today, what we need is capital investment. If this is not done, our industry will not grow. If the industry does not grow, there would be unemployment, and in the absence of employment, there would be starvation, unrest and the country would disintegrate. Hence, the most important thing is to improve our economy. For this we need to launch a gigantic programme of industrialisation and we have done so.

I am happy to say that last year our industrialisation programme progressed smoothly for about eight months, but after 6 December, and the bomb blasts in Bombay, it received a setback and slowed down. This happens. If law and order or peace in the country is threatened, why should the people from outside come here, even if

they are our own people, and invest their money? It became apparent that after the good record of eight months, their enthusiasm got dampened. But, on the whole, our industrialisation programme is progressing well. Today, the country has about 10,000 proposals for setting up small and big projects and they are about to be set up.

While marching towards industrialisation, we have taken steps to ensure that our workers do not suffer in any way. We have created a separate fund for them with an amount of about 2,000 crore rupees. The workers shall be helped with this money. They won't be allowed to remain without job. The money will be provided to them from this fund for training to redeploy them in any other job and care will be taken about their future.

Now, I come to agriculture. It is a matter of great pride for us that this year's agricultural production has crossed all records of the past 40 years. We have increased our production to this level and I, on behalf of the people, the country, and on behalf of the Government of India, would like to congratulate and felicitate the farmers of the country. Of course, farmer is the "Annadata" but today he is also our exporter. For the first time, we are exporting our agricultural produce and this export can be on very large scale and we want to extend all support to this venture. The New Agricultural Policy lays great emphasis on the export of agricultural products. It will require more investments and more capital. We want to invest more on irrigation because the more we invest, the higher will be the yield. India is among the very few nations of the world which can produce enough not only for feeding its own people but also for export. We have to maintain this tempo. We have to give maximum benefit to our farmers.

In the last two years, you have noticed, the support prices that we give to the farmers have been going up. For instance, the support price of wheat has been enhanced by Rs. 55 per quintal and gram by Rs. 100. We have also raised the support price of different varieties of paddy between Rs. 40 and Rs. 60 per quintal.

Have you or any farmer ever heard of an increase of such a magnitude in the support price? There was a time when it was difficult

to give an increase of one or two rupees in the support price. At present, we are giving these higher support prices because the expenditure of farmer has also increased. It is not a charity nor any obligation. Rather, the farmer is obliging us. We are only cooperating with and supporting him. Therefore, we should fix a reasonable price and should not hesitate to pay that. If we were to import foodgrains, we would have realised our burden and our consequent expenditure. The farmer is saving a lot of foreign exchange for us. Once again, I would like to congratulate the farmer.

Another programme in the field of agriculture is that of crop insurance. This programme existed earlier also, but had some lacunae in it. It was thought to prepare a pilot scheme to be implemented next year. It would cover the farmers and include all the crops. First we would implement the scheme on pilot basis in one district of each State. When this programme is extended to the whole country, the farmer would have no worry about the fate of his crops in the event of excessive rains, hailstorms, and drought. If the crop insurance programme runs well, the farmer would not have to worry about these natural calamities.

It is well known that we have helped the farmers a lot in so far as fertilizers are concerned. We are giving them assistance of Rs. 1,000 per tonne. DAP and other fertilizers were available at cheaper rates in foreign countries as compared to the rates of indigenous fertilizers. We, therefore, moved swiftly to import them. The difference in prices of indigenously produced and the imported fertilizers ranged between Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 2,500 per tonne. We have imported fertilizers for the whole year. Today, I would like to assure the farmers that they will have no worry about the continuous availability of fertilizer for a year. Whatever they want, and in whatever quantity, is available in our country. There are some factories which have become unviable, the costs of their production have started increasing. So we have given them many more facilities and made them viable. At present, they are also engaged in the production.

Now I would like to tell you a few things about the rural development. You have heard about the outlay of Rs. 30,000 crore on

rural development and this money is being used for the schemes which benefit the rural people directly.

You may recall that last year I had announced a programme for artisans. There are lots of craftsmen and artisans in our villages but their tools are very old. These may be as old as 100 to 200 years. They work with these obsolete tools; hence their productivity is restricted. We had declared that modern tools would be provided to all the rural craftsmen of the country and we would take up a massive programme for providing them. I am happy to say that we had taken up 62 districts last year and 100 more districts this year and by the end of current Five Year Plan, we would be implementing this programme throughout the country.

The programme has proved beneficial. More than 1 to 1.5 lakh artisans have benefitted from this scheme and their productivity enhanced, so much so, some of the people who had left their hearth and home for the cities ultimately returned to the villages, for now they can earn the same amount of money sitting in their homes in the village itself. So why should they go to the cities? This is happening silently without any pomp or show. In villages, the artisan is being convinced that new tool kits are beneficial to him and artisans are profiting from this. This programme is not to be left half-way. The programme will go on during the entire Plan period until each one of our artisans starts working with improved tools. In a way, this will bring about a revolution in the lives of artisans.

You are aware that a massive programme for the supply of drinking water has been taken up. Almost all the villages known as revenue villages have been covered. But every village also has small hamlets. Now these hamlets have to be covered because even if there are three-four hamlets or even 10 families, they also need water and their requirement is to be met. One cannot say that since there are only a few people over there, they would not require water. Everybody needs water. So to provide drinking water to all, a massive programme is going on under the Rural Development Department.

Now, the Panchayati Raj. After four years of intensive efforts, overcoming obstacles, we have recently passed the Panchayati Raj Bill in Parliament and State governments have also passed it in their Assemblies. It has now become an Act. Within a year the country shall have a new structure of Panchayati Raj wherein the people's power will find expression. The power which was vested in them but suppressed, will emerge and you will see that the Panchayat will take up impressive programmes of development. India shall witness a new enthusiasm and massive programme of development.

I would like to tell my sisters, that when the new Panchayat is constituted, it will have thirty per cent women members in it. You should be prepared for shouldering such a heavy responsibility. Till now there used to be few women in the Panchayat and they could not participate actively but now the women will have to participate more actively in the Panchayats. They will have to take over the work assigned to them. The reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes already exists and will be maintained in proportion to their population.

Last year, I had announced that we would form a Commission for the Safai Karmacharis. I am happy to announce that we have decided to form not just a Commission, but a statutory Commission. The Bill to this effect is already before Parliament for consideration. In the next few days it will be passed by Parliament. Safai Karmacharis belong to the backward community. Their uplift is a must and we would not spare any effort to do it.

We are determined to eliminate the practice of carrying human excreta on head which is still in vogue in some of our cities and small towns. To eliminate the practice, we have made a provision of Rs. 111 crore this year. We would make every effort to provide Safai Karmacharis with alternative employment. Once a Commission is formed, it will look into their problems and evolve measures to solve them. I want to assure our brethren that the Commission's recommendations will receive full attention from the Government.

You might be aware of the constitution of the National Backward Class Financial Development Corporation. The Corporation has done a good job. It has given loans to 25,000 people and has arranged for their livelihood within a short span of one year. In the same way, thousands more will benefit from this Corporation.

I also want to tell our weavers that for the first time, a change in their life is awaiting them. So far, they were never included in the schemes for the rural development. For the first time now, the weavers have been included in these schemes currently being implemented in the rural areas. They will be given looms, working sheds and working capital and for this a sum of Rs. 525 crore has been earmarked.

Now with this new programme, the weavers have a new hope for a better life. I want to congratulate them on this occasion and would like to tell them to take full advantage of these facilities.

In the meanwhile, there was drought in many States and floods in some others. In fact, the situation was such that in the same State, in one part there was drought, while in the other part, there were floods. I visited some of these States. We gave them timely help to provide relief to the affected people to the extent possible.

Floods are a recurring phenomenon. They visit us every year. Relief is provided. After the floods recede, all is forgotten till the next flood. This is not proper. We have to think of some permanent solution to control the floods. We will take all aspects into consideration. This task cannot be completed in a short time. It may take years. But we have to make a beginning somewhere. I assure you that we would initiate action on this; whether it is in Bihar or Uttar Pradesh or any other State. Otherwise the curse of floods will always haunt our country.

Brothers, now I want to tell you about some new schemes and make some announcements.

In the last few days, we have taken stock of several schemes which are continuing in the country, but we will also have to introduce some new schemes and implement them.

The first scheme relates to our sisters, specially those living in the rural areas. The present plight of the women is well known to everybody. This situation needs improvement. Some of us are of the view that if the women are self-reliant in financial matters, they will be able to hold their heads high. A woman should get a status in the society. Her role should not be confined to routine household work but she should be made an important constituent of the society, which is called empowerment. And today, we have to take up the programme of empowering the women. It is a very important thing but it looks as though it would take a lot of time. Every adult woman of the country should have an account of her own in a bank or in a post office wherever possible so that she can get the status of an account holder.

She should have the freedom of operating her account independently as others do. And she should be able to deposit or withdraw the money from that account, whether it is an amount of Rs. 100, Rs. 50 or even Rs. 30. Therefore, we have taken up this scheme which involves a Government expenditure of Rs. 1,000 crore. A woman who opens a savings account and deposits Rs. 300 within a year, the Government will give her Rs. 75 and she will be getting Rs. 375 after a year. All this money will be hers. We do not want to take anything from her, rather, we want to give Rs. 75 from our side. The Government will be incurring a loss on this scheme, but I am sure the kind of self-confidence that it will generate in women is priceless. Nobody can assess the value of that self-confidence. Now that they are poised to shoulder the bigger responsibilities in Panchayat system, they should know at least what is an account. Today, how many women are there in the rural society who have their own independent account? There must be very few, I guess. Tomorrow when crores of such accounts are opened, it would usher in a new revolution in the world of women. I want to reiterate my determination to implement this programme.

There are several voluntary organisations, Mahila Mandals working in the villages. I want to appeal to them to help our women to

run this programme which the Government has decided to implement by incurring a large expenditure. These organisations need to provide their help only for one year. Thereafter our womenfolk will themselves learn about this and will not seek their help. We must take up this programme because it generates a new attitude.

An employment programme is currently going on in Maharashtra, Karnataka etc. Our entire scheme is also employment oriented and we have to see how maximum number of people could be given employment. In the rural areas, people get employment during the agricultural season but during the course of the year there are at least 100 days, which are called lean days when there is not much agricultural activity. People remain idle. We have decided to provide them employment during these 100 days. Though it may not be guaranteed, but I assure them that those who are ready to work will get work as is being done in Karnataka and Maharashtra at present. We want to adopt this scheme throughout the country. Though the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and other schemes are already there, the main purpose of this scheme is to provide assured employment to those who are unemployed. As I have announced last year, we want to implement this programme in all 1,700 backward blocks in the country where the poorest of the poor live and which are situated in the hilly, desert or the tribal areas. The work will start in those blocks because maximum number of unemployed persons are there and people do not even get a square meal a day. Later it will be extended to cover the entire country.

The third programme is for our semi-educated youth who do not get employment. Educated unemployed such as matriculates or under-matrices, do not get work because perhaps their qualification is inadequate, or because there is no ready employment. For them, we have envisaged a scheme under which they can start their own small enterprises. Thousands of occupations, such as opening of shops, require only a little training for our youth. They do not require any high qualifications. We want to give employment to such people. If two people start any joint enterprise, the Government would provide them Rs. one lakh as loan. Of this amount of Rs. one lakh, Rs. 7,500 will be subsidy. We will provide training and other facilities to run the

enterprise. We think that within the remaining three years of the present Five Year Plan, we can provide such jobs to 10 lakh youths of the country. We have made financial provision for this scheme. We are announcing these three new schemes today because, we think that these programmes can be completed during the remaining three years.

Now, I will turn to political scenario. As far as Punjab is concerned, I have already said and you also know that there is now complete peace. If someone asks which is the most peaceful State in the country today, the answer will be Punjab. This is the same Punjab which had been bleeding for the last 12 years. This is a matter of pride for the people and the Government of Punjab, who have made it all possible.

It is also a matter of pride for the men of our armed forces and police who grappled with the terrorists and controlled them. On behalf of the nation, I extend the heartiest felicitation to them all. Punjab is our granary. If there is any disturbance there, it will affect the entire country. But kudos to the people of Punjab who made this miracle possible and maintained the agricultural production and did not allow it to slide down from its number one position when the State was bleeding. This is a matter of great pride. I want to congratulate them again. Now Punjab is poised for an industrial revolution. All ground work has been done. You will see that in the next two-three years, there will be an industrial revolution along with the Green Revolution.

The situation in Kashmir has not improved as yet. There is only a marginal improvement but we still have to do a lot. In Kashmir, the incitement, money and weapons and trained people come from Pakistan. The trouble is not from within Kashmir but it comes from across the border. People of Kashmir are against terrorism. This, I can state with full confidence. But when they face bullets, they are naturally scared. Though people do not say it, but if terrorism comes to an end, they will be very happy and heave a sigh of relief. There is no doubt about it. While Pakistan is carrying out false propaganda about human rights violation in J. & K. only two days ago the terrorists from that country stopped a bus midway and pulled out 16 or 17 people and shot

them dead. Do they mean that those who have been the victims of their bullets have no human rights? Have they no right to live? Only when the terrorists get killed in encounters, why do these people get perturbed, why do they campaign for upholding the human rights? Do only the terrorists have human rights? They have a right to kill others and they also have human rights to the effect that nobody should kill them. This is a warped logic beyond comprehension and we are not prepared to accept it. I would like to congratulate those who fought against terrorism and caught many terrorists and have tried to bring the situation somewhat under control. This process will continue. Pakistan may do whatever it wants, but Kashmir is an inalienable part of India. Nobody can separate it from India, whatever means they may use. Recently, Pakistan had reached where it would have been declared a terrorist state. Now when they provide weapons and other material for promoting terrorism, whom they are harming? I would like to appeal to them and also warn them that this plan will benefit no one of them in any case. India will remain unmoved from its position that Kashmir will remain an integral part of India and we will always serve the people of Kashmir in every possible manner and solve their problems. Nothing can be achieved from this bloodshed.

Issues have come up about Assam, Bodoland and recently Jharkhand. Certain problems are considered by locals as a matter of life and death because when a movement is carried on for a long time without any result, one feels bad. One becomes irritated and loses self-control. Assam problem has been solved. Bodoland problem has been solved and the matter relating to Jharkhand will also be resolved shortly. We should, therefore, not get impatient. There is no need to get excited and lose one's temper. This is a message, I have for them.

In so far as Ayodhya is concerned, I was hesitant to comment on the issue. But it is necessary to say that there has been such destruction that has tarnished India's image. Abroad, India's image looks sullied. We appear to be destructive. We have been known as a peace loving nation for the past 5000 years. Now the opinion all over the world about us has undergone a change and people are wondering how we have given in to violence. We are not covered with more glory. On the

contrary, we have been defamed. People have started doubting our cultural traditions and our peace loving nature. I would say that no condemnation of this disrespectful act will be adequate. But the irony is that this act is being projected as praiseworthy. If somebody goes abroad to project the demolition as a good act, this further spoils our image.

I want to emphasise that it is not a good move. Within a short span of time, it would be clear as to who was responsible for this. It will also be known as to how it was done, who did it and who were behind it.

Today, I want to tell you that only one motive is working behind these things. It has become a habit to misuse religion for political purposes. Politics is a good thing, so is religion. Without religion, there is no direction, one becomes confused. Religion, whichever it may be, is meant for guiding our lives to the right path. Politics shows the way for the organisation of society and the organisation of the state. Religion and politics both have their rightful places in their appointed spheres. But when both are mixed and religion is used for political purposes, religion does not remain religion, it takes the shape of communalism. We have to stand unitedly and fight against communalism. It includes the government and the people. No sacrifice is too big for it. For the past few years, communalism is raising its head and if this situation is allowed to continue, there will be no future for our country and the nation will fall apart. Once it is accepted that one religion is superior and another is inferior, one is good and the other is bad, then there will be no unity in this country, no integrity. The nation will disintegrate. It is not mentioned in any religion to hate or to look down upon other religions. All are equal. Whether it is a majority or a minority in our country, all are equal under our Constitution. Whatever the number, even the miniscule has the same rights that are enjoyed by the majority. That is why we have to assert that any such discrimination will not work in this country, and shall not be tolerated. You have also to assert that whosoever violates the Constitution, cannot do it for all time to come. One may do it for one or two days, in one election or two elections, but soon people will understand and will teach such

violaters a lesson. I want to impress that we have to get rid of these things. Religion should be kept separate from politics. We have to give importance to both. Follow your religion, nobody has any objection. Go and work for your respective parties, give details of your programmes to the people, get votes and rule. Nobody has any objection. But, no one has a right to ask for votes in the name of Hindu or Islam or Christianity. No one has a right to exploit the sentiments of the people, by creating a frenzy fundamentalism. This should never be allowed to happen, this is my appeal to you.

Secularism is our life breath. The moment it stops, our breath will cease, nation's breath will cease. The Government is making efforts to preserve our secular character. A Bill has been brought before Parliament which prohibits the use of religion in politics. However, law alone is not enough.

There is a need for spreading awareness among the masses about the dangers of using religion in politics. Each and everyone should be made aware of this. I want to stress that whatever we are doing should be supplemented by you. All of us have to work together for its success.

I was speaking of destruction. How do we react to destruction? Destruction cannot be countered with destruction. If somebody brings down a structure, the response cannot be the destruction of something else. Whatever has been demolished, will have to be built, rebuilt. No one knows how many cities had been destroyed during the last World War. Hundreds of cities were razed to the ground. London was a fire and half of it was destroyed. But nobody despaired. Each and every building destroyed was reconstructed after the Great War; so also destroyed cities were reconstructed; half of London which was destroyed was rebuilt; in a better manner than the earlier ones. Today, we should not kneel down before these destructive forces and particularly, the destruction in Ayodhya. We will not accept defeat and will respond to the destruction by reconstruction. I not only assure you of this but also call upon all of you to come forward. If we work unitedly, the recent past of Ayodhya, which has left a scar in the hearts of the people will disappear. Only then will we be able to make secularism a success in this country.

As regards foreign affairs, you are aware that India has been very active during the past two years. We are hosting in our country a meeting of G-15, a forum of developing countries. There are a number of programmes that developing countries have to undertake. In the competition between North and South, India has always been playing an excellent role on behalf of developing countries.

I hope India will succeed in her efforts and developing countries will continue to march forward and achieve prosperity. Their programmes for development will be successfully implemented.

New complaints, disputes and controversies are developing today in the sphere of environment. They need to be solved. Not through confrontation but through discussions and dialogues, because through confrontation we would not succeed. Gone are the days when there were two power blocs. They used to quarrel some times directly; at other times by provoking groups having allegiance to them and instigating the latter to indulge in small skirmishes. Now the situation has changed. In the new situation we have to move forward through our reasoning and strong will. If you have a strong will, you will succeed.

Our relations with the neighbouring countries, except Pakistan, are good. We can have good relations with Pakistan too. I have met the Pakistan Prime Minister about half a dozen times. Our personal relations are very cordial but when it comes to matters of policy, it is difficult to say anything. Elections are going to be held shortly in Pakistan and a new leadership will take over. I hope the new leadership will come with greater sense of realism and will have the courage to accept the reality and then alone could there be further and meaningful dialogue between us.

There need be no doubt on this. We are ready for talks, but one thing is clear, Kashmir is an indivisible part of India. It has been and will remain so. If this reality is accepted, there will be friendship and cooperation. I want to give this assurance. I want to give the same assurance to Pakistan, our neighbour and that it should forget about

making efforts to separate Kashmir from India. That efforts have been made time and again and campaigning and spending have been going on. But now Pakistan must forget this. We can remain good friends for ever on this basis and our friendship will serve as a model to the world.

Friends, I have taken much of your time. Today, whatever we are doing, we are doing for millions of our poor brothers and sisters. There are elements who are attempting to disturb our economic reforms by saying that money is being brought from outside, why it is being brought and on what will it be spent?

Whatever may be the source of money, it will be used to set up industry in India. The investor will not take away the industry to his country. He will construct railways, roads. I have already stated whatever infrastructure is created, it will remain with us. Now, the foreign investor may remain for whatever time in the country. Later he may like to go away. Structures raised by him will belong to the country. At the most, we have to pay him. They are welcome to join hands with us in the development of India as they are doing in other countries. They are welcome and millions of our people will be benefited and we are determined to achieve this. I am not satisfied with 30,000 crore rupees. Had it been 50,000 crores or more, I would have been happier. Had it been one lakh crore rupees it would have made me still happier. But we don't have that sort of money. We will do whatever we can.

So many civilizations have spread from India. India has been the birth place of many civilizations. Today, we have to save ourselves from the doubts in the minds of people regarding our civilization, our culture and our peace-loving nature. Otherwise, our glory, our image and our structure will be adversely affected and it will be very difficult to regain them. One more thing I want to say. If our attention is diverted from our economic programmes even for a month, then it would lead to severe economic loss. One should appreciate this. There were bomb blasts in Bombay. Our Finance Ministry says that on conservative estimates within a span of one or two months, we suffered a loss of about ten thousand crore rupees. In two months, if we suffer

a loss of ten thousand crore rupees just because some mad person throws a bomb, what does it mean? In such a big country, will we allow two or three bombs to put the economy in disarray? How will we work? We will just not permit this to happen.

We do not tolerate any bomb blast. Wherever it occurs, I assure you, it would be dealt with. Preventive measures will be taken and those involved will be punished. But if such an incident does occur once in a while, why should it divert our attention from the path of economic progress? We want to move towards one direction only and it is the direction of economic progress. We are already lagging behind. Many smaller countries have gone much ahead of us. In case, for another two or three years, we get bogged down with Hindu-Muslim riots, caste disputes and political and religious conflicts, and do not pay single-minded attention to economic progress, then our future will be bleak. This is the warning, we are receiving from all over the world. Our wisdom is also sounding a note of warning. Whether we listen to the voice of sanity or not, it is up to us. I would say, we must listen to it. I will give you an example from an *Upanishad*. There is a dancer. She is dancing while the musical instruments are being played and songs are being sung. She has a pitcher on her head. She would not allow the pitcher to fall, dance she must, her whole body would sway, but the pitcher would remain on her head. *Maulistha Kumbha Parirakshana Dhiranativa*. This is what our attitude should be. Let there be any calamity; let us be involved in any other activity; but the pitcher of development placed on our head, the pitcher of advancement, the pitcher of economic programmes—that pitcher should never be allowed to topple down. This caution is a must for us. If we are cautious enough to keep moving forward, there will be no problem for us.

In the comity of nations, India has taken her appropriate place and we will continue to strive to improve our position. Many opportunities are awaiting us. Soon the Security Council will be expanded. The UN has a number of programmes in which we have to play a greater role. We have always been active there. Wherever there has been a dispute, people start looking towards India, for we are not in

favour of aggravating differences. We are among those who are for peace. We ourselves are peace-loving people. Hence, we have an important place there. But a country which is not internally strong cannot be considered strong abroad. Therefore, I would like to say with due respect to you that whether we belong to the minority or majority or any other faith or are even atheist, it does not matter. This is a matter of individual faith. I have already stated that there would not be any discrimination in so far as minorities are concerned. They are in minority only in numbers, but from the point of view of citizenship they are equal. Everybody would enjoy the same rights. This is what I want to say. Today minorities feel insecure with regard to their life and property. Recent riots have increased this sense of insecurity; they are scared. In this context I would mention to you that the police force is there to keep law and order. In this force we have introduced battalions of Rapid Action Force. Already five battalions have been formed and another five are under training. We wish to increase the number of these battalions since this mixed force can be deployed wherever or whenever riots occur and will successfully restore law and order. The members of the Rapid Action Force will undergo a little more intensive training than an ordinary policeman. This training will be very comprehensive. It will be a complete action. The idea of Rapid Action Force was conceived during the time of Smt Indira Gandhi and also considered during the period of Rajivji. But I feel proud that I got the opportunity to implement the idea and we are pursuing these ideas and schemes relentlessly.

We have founded a National Minority Finance and Development Corporation with an authorised capital of Rs. 500 crore only a day or two ago. When we decided to have this Corporation, we were considering whether it would be correct from the legal point of view. Then we came to the conclusion that the setting up of this Corporation is perfectly in order. There is nothing wrong in it. People will see that on one hand we will do everything possible to protect the life and property of the minorities and on the other, we will also do whatever is essential for the economic uplift of minorities. Of course, the Minority Commission has already been vested with statutory powers. Its recommendations will be accepted to the extent possible.

Maulana Azad Education Foundation will be utilised as a medium for further educating the people belonging to minorities. We will give the Foundation more fund, more help. We will make the Foundation an instrument to serve more and more people in the field of education.

In the context of Waqf Act, either a new law will be enacted or a number of amendments will be made in the existing law. This will help prevent irregularities regarding Waqf properties. There are a number of programmes, for instance, there is the 15-point programme. There are other programmes too, but as we are short of time, we cannot go into details. However I want to emphasise once again that whether it be the minority or majority, they have to live together. Nobody will go from this place. We will stay here together. This is our determination.

Therefore, the signal that we would like to send to the world today is: We will not allow our unity and integrity to suffer and will not allow our achievements to fritter away. This is a new responsibility which we have to shoulder. We pray to the Lord Almighty to give us strength so that we may go forward and proceed towards our goal. From Mahatma Gandhi to Rajivji all the leaders have shown the way to our countrymen. Proceeding on that path, we have to tell the world that our steps would never falter. We will continue to move forward on the path shown by them and we shall redeem ourselves alongwith the country and will be able to redeem the human race as well.

In this great task of redeeming the human race, we will fulfil our responsibility. With this determination and resolve we assemble here together once again on this fifteenth of August. All the countrymen, wherever you are, who are listening to me in every nook and corner, I wish to congratulate and thank all of you once again. I wish you happiness and prosperity in the coming year.

Mother Teresa –an Epitome of Love and Human Care

WE HAVE ASSEMBLED here today on a very special occasion and for a very special purpose. Today is Rajivji's birth anniversary. In commemoration, Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award is being given to Mother Teresa. The memory of one and the memorable contributions of the other generate inspiring thoughts. The people of India shall always feel Rajiv Gandhi's presence through his profound love for the nation which shall remain and last, which shall be a beacon of light, that cannot be put out. Rajiv Gandhi sacrificed his life while on his mission of goodwill for his people and for all people. Sadbhavana Award instituted in his name fills the void in some measure. Rajiv Gandhi was a many splendoured personality. He was endowed with a rare personal charm. He was one from the great family which contributed three Prime Ministers. Rajiv Gandhi himself was one among the youngest Prime Ministers anywhere in the world. He dominated the Indian political scene during the later half of 1980s. It was my pleasure and privilege to have been with him, to have known him, to have worked with him. We do not have the time now to give you even an outline of Rajiv Gandhi's life and work. However, let me touch upon his characteristic of Sadbhavana, the name and the ideal that have been brought together by the institution of this National Award by which we think of Rajiv Gandhi and Sadbhavana at the same time.

Rajiv Gandhi was an embodiment of the tradition of brotherhood and a model of the ennobling ideal of secularism that constitutes the centrepiece of our national culture. He was at home, whether in a gurudwara, a mosque, a temple, a church or a Buddha vihar. Everywhere he spread the message of love and goodwill and young Indians in every part of India cherished his ideals. Rajiv Gandhi's donation of his eyes to the Rajendra Prasad Centre of Ophthalmic Science was

Speech at the presentation of Rajiv Gandhi Memorial National Sadbhavana Award, New Delhi, 20 August 1993

another goodwill gesture that reflects his perennial affection for his countrymen. Not just his own countrymen, goodwill for all fellow human beings, irrespective of wherever they are, was the foundation of his thinking. Imbibed by feelings of Sadbhavana, Rajivji inspired his approach to the international affairs with the same idealism. To cite an instance, Rajiv Gandhi's bold decision to visit China came after 34 years since the first Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited that country. Rajiv Gandhi's historic visit was one of goodwill, uncluttered by prevailing border disputes, which were to be dealt with separately. This visit marked a watershed and paved the way for so much good that has occurred in our relations with this large neighbouring country. Let us recall what he did in 1985 when Bangladesh was hit by a natural calamity. On 2 June 1985, Rajiv Gandhi flew to Dhaka and then on to Char Island, called 'Burichar' to meet people in distress, affected by the cyclone, to assure them that they were not alone in their suffering. Think of the SAARC Initiatives, the AFRICA Fund, the Planet Protection Fund or the Delhi Declaration or the Six-Nation-Five-Continent Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament, Rajivji's impulses and insights are manifest of his unflinching dedication to the approach of goodwill and Sadbhavana.

Even in regard to technology, an aspect dear to him, his concepts are characterised by a unique, unifying ideal. For instance, Rajivji's distinction of a developed and a developing country was in terms of technology. In his words, "there is only one difference and that is the difference in technology, that they use in their day-to-day lives. If a country uses better technology, it is a developed country. If it uses worse or older technology, it is a backward country and an underdeveloped country." Within our country, the same thing holds true. Rajiv Gandhi, therefore, proclaimed that technology has to be India's vision. During the period of his Prime Ministership, several technological developments were realised. Self-sufficiency in food, boost to oil-seeds production, growth in telecommunications, the flourishing of Indian Remote Sensing Programmes, setting up of new atomic power stations, the launching of the Agni system, the spectrum is wide and full of bright colours. So technology was not just an instrument of national development for him; he looked upon technology as a liberating force, as an integrating force.

We have an extraordinary individual as the first recipient of the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award. May I say that the prestige of this Award is now set in the mould of her grace, her presence and her willingness to accept the same. One always searches for an answer as to how great men or women are born or are they made? Mother Teresa's life from young age has now been written about. It makes extraordinary reading and provides an amazing scenario of innumerable incidents that seem to contain the answer to the question I raised. I must mention one of these incidents that biographers have described and referred to as a turning point. One night as Mother Teresa was walking down a Calcutta street, she found a woman in a dying condition, crying out for help. Mother Teresa promptly reached on the spot and took the woman from one hospital to another but no medical help was forthcoming for one reason or other. Finally, Mother Teresa decided to take the woman home to let her die peacefully in the comfort of her loving arms. Thousands of dying destitutes have since been taken care of, in the same way, the way of loving care during the dying woman's, apart from many many thousands who were saved by her service, timely service, compassionate service. Mother Teresa pursued her mission of removing suffering and pain of so many poor Indians with exemplary devotion in several and in her own original ways. She did not stop with India, her work of love and care soon engulfed other countries. In her acceptance speech of the Nobel Prize, Mother Teresa aptly describes the poverty of the West. She says, "Around the world, not only in the poor countries, I found the poverty of the West so much more difficult to remove. When I pick up a person from the street, hungry, I give him a plate of rice, a piece of bread. I am satisfied, I have removed that hunger. But a person that is shut out, that feels unwanted, unloved, terrified, the person that has been thrown out from society, that poverty is so hurtful and so much that I find it very difficult. Our sisters are working amongst that kind of people in the West." She has established many homes all over the world to take care of the destitutes and the lonely souls. It is our good fortune that we have Mother Teresa in India's contemporary history.

There is so much to say about Rajiv Gandhi in whose name we have the Award and its first recipient, Mother Teresa. Their greatness

cannot be adequately described in words. However, it fascinates me to point out that in a world in which we men and women strive to perform it in, is indeed, extremely rare, that one can come across a combination as special as what we are witnessing this evening. An award in the name of a dear leader of exceptional impact upon our national scene as well as international affairs and a recipient, a phenomenal missionary who has made an indelible mark in India's as also the world's record of human care. I wonder, if you can ever better this marvel of a combination.

I am, indeed, greatly delighted to have been associated with this memorable event.

Rajiv Gandhi : a Dynamic Leader

TODAY IS A memorable day for us. A dynamic leader finds a permanent place of honour among the great leaders of India. It is a fitting and deserving honour being bestowed on a person, who displayed rare qualities of leadership having already carved a niche for himself in the hearts of the people, he now takes his place in more ceremonial precincts, equally reflective of the affection of the people of our country for their young leader.

Shri Rajiv Gandhi would be among the youngest leaders to adorn the galleries of this Hall, may be the youngest, the very youngest. He would certainly be the leader with the briefest career in the public life. Such was the impact of his meteoric career that few can claim to have influenced the country as deeply in as short a period. Shri Rajiv Gandhi entered politics with little experience of it. In fact, it is well known that it was a reluctant entry of a man beckoned by destiny and history. He brought with him, his intellect, his humanism, his gentleness, his youth

Speech while unveiling the portrait of Rajiv Gandhi in the Central Hall of Parliament, New Delhi, 20 August 1993

and above all his dynamism. He imbued Indian politics with his enthusiasm capturing the imagination of the people. He was a man in a hurry driven imperceptibly by some urge that things have to be done in record time; we have no justification in delaying anything that needs to be done in time. He was almost obsessed with the time-overruns, with the time-lags and delays which happened in the administration. We had many examples of his impatience almost everyday. He epitomised continuity in charge, retaining whatever he knew was good for the country and pushing inexhortably for change, wherever he felt that the existing system had outlived its utility. He opened India to new vistas of thought, merit look up and beyond not just to the next day or year but to the next century. He rediscovered India for us, a youthful and vibrant India more confident of the future. He had an instinctive understanding of India's problems. His faith in secularism and democracy was unwavering.

As a Parliamentarian, he displayed extraordinary qualities of leadership, debating skill and sense of humour. The lowering of the voting age, the drive for modernisation and economic liberalisation, the New Education Policy and other steps of human resource development, not to speak of the very new concept of Panchayati Raj, which he propounded, the welfare programmes to reduce unemployment and poverty and linking them up with technological progress, which is evident from the technology missions he instituted, are some of the lasting contributions of Rajivji to us.

Not all that he wanted could be achieved during the relatively brief tenure of his Prime Ministership. We have his unfinished task before us to carry out as a solemn trust, his calm and serene presence in the form of this portrait will serve as a reminder, lest we are amiss. More significantly, it will be a source of inspiration to us for all time to come and therefore this is the occasion not only to be present at the unveiling ceremony but the real discovery of Rajivji's qualities and their being adopted by the coming generations in the interest of the country. This is, what I think, the significance of this occasion.

Quality Should be the Part of National Life

THOSE WHO WORKED with Rajiv Gandhi knew very well, how conscious sometimes, how obsessed he was with the quality of things, that are made in our country. Even small things lying on the table, something lying in the room, somewhere, a chair or anything, which he found to be substandard, he felt jittery about it. It was almost a daily experience for us to hear him commenting and feeling visibly unhappy, when he found that the quality of something, which need not have been very complicated, need not have been costlier was poor just because someone had not paid the attention, that it required. In many cases this is so.

There is wastefulness, there is inefficiency, there is indifference, the loss of things and perhaps all these were the result of a sheltered protected, guaranteed market, market of India's size which make the manufacturers so satisfied with themselves, so indifferent to improvement of quality that over the years, over the decades, quality deteriorated and there was really none to look after it and the poor consumer had to do with whatever he got in the market, because it was more or less a monopoly market.

Liberalisation, export promotion, international competition and quality improvement, all these go together. One is a result of the other, one is the motivation for the other and all this combined becomes a package. A package which cannot be unpacked, which cannot be seen in isolation—no part of it could be seen in isolation. It has to be a whole package. So we have embarked on this even when Rajivji gave the call but now we are in a position to give the awards, the first Rajiv Gandhi Awards for Quality and I would like to very heartily congratulate the pioneers in this, the first awardees who are with us today.

We have to go a long way, in fact, after liberalisation. I found some of our manufacturers coming and expressing a little unhappiness. They are not expecting all this to come so soon. They go on criticising the Government asking for this, asking for that and think the Government not to respond. There was a little surprise to find that the Government had taken steps, which were far ahead of what they expected. But it's a good thing, if we had shocked them a little into activity, I am happy about it. This is a continuous process. I cannot see this process coming to an end and India or any country for that matter, any company, any manufacturer ever resting on his oars and saying this is it, I have done the best, I have nothing more to do. This is not possible. And therefore, it is an interminable race, race for not just survival. I don't just call it survival, because once you are in the international market you must make a place for yourself. If you have no place then, of course, all these efforts to enter the international market or enter the global economy would have no meaning and for India it would have been a very negative thing. We have entered the market and we will have to find a place, keep that place, keep on improving on that place and I am sure that with a little more effort and particularly R & D effort we will be able to do that.

I find that in all this greater efficiency and greater emphasis on R&D would be of the essence. Efficiency also is a result of better R&D, better methods being available and better incentives being available and once you start getting results, you feel a little intoxication. Success is the greatest intoxicant as we all know and failure is the greatest depression. So it is the success of a venture that makes it more success and nothing succeeds like success and by the same token perhaps nothing fails like failure. So I am happy that this new chapter has started.

It was quite natural for Rajiv Gandhi to think of quality, because he was thinking for the next century essentially. He was also planning the interregnum before we reach the next century but his sights were on the next century, which means that the competition you can expect it to be absolutely fierce in the coming years. And you have to get ready for such a very fierce and unsparing competition. No one will excuse you

for any lapse, any defect anywhere. So this has to permeate in all fields of activity, in all walks of life, in every department of national life. It's not just the manufacturer or the industrialist or the producer who has to look after quality and others don't. It just doesn't happen like that, quality becomes a part of national life and only then it manifests itself in every sphere. If it manifests in one sphere it has to manifest in every sphere of activity. Take administration for instance. What can a poor entrepreneur do if we take eternity for moving the files from one place to another.

Thanks to the liberalisation policy, thanks to removing all the steps, there is no need for too much delay to occur in Government. Because we would like to keep the economic activity, as much as we can, off the control, in course of time, I think, it will take care of itself. It will have its own autonomy, its own dynamism, its own inspiration and its own incentive. In that process whatever Government is able to do, will certainly do. So in the new context your normal target is not going to be available to you, namely the Government. So you cannot blame the Government and we are happy about it. At least we will be free from the blame. But we will certainly help you, certainly give you whatever is necessary by way of encouragement and this is going to be in the interest of the masses. This is really what Rajivji argued and argued. He said all this modernisation is not for the elite, is not for the *crorepatis* of this country. It is for the poor people, it is for the poor masses to give that message across. It was very difficult in the first one or two years and I find that even today this message is not automatically accepted. You have to go ahead telling people, meeting after meeting, group after group that all this is meant for the poor. Eventually, if big factories are coming, those factories are to produce goods which are needed by the farmers, by the small entrepreneurs, by common man and this nexus needs to be established again and again. We will do that part of it as far as possible, as far as we can. There will always be a doubting Thomas; but it does not matter. The new policies package has been expected by the people of India. I have absolutely no doubt about that, whenever I talk of them, I feel it in my bones that I am talking. I am swimming with the tide not against it.

So I am happy that in these two years, we were able to change the course to a very large extent. Now it is for us to accelerate the new course. It is at this time that we are having this function of giving awards. I am sure that this will be a source of encouragement to all those who are engaged in producing things in this country and competing in the world market, competing with each other and I wish them well.

An Unprecedented Tragedy

I AM SPEAKING to you today with a heavy heart. Parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka have had an unprecedented tragedy and thousands and thousands have lost their lives. Many more thousands have been injured. This has never happened in that part of the country and perhaps in any part of the country so far. It is absolutely unprecedented. The devastation is so great that even now full reports have not been received, they are still coming in. Meanwhile whatever is humanly possible by the Central Government, by the State governments, by the non-official organisations is being done to rush relief to the people, but the tragedy is that even all the bodies have not been recovered because they have been buried under debris. The work is going on in full swing but I am afraid it will take some more time to complete it. The Army also has been deployed and that they are doing a very good job. Nevertheless, it is the people who are affected; who have to bear this with a bit fortitude and calm. Let us hope and pray that they will get the strength to face this.

There is nothing more that we can do from a distance. However, the work which has been taken on hand will be completed and whatever immediate relief can be given will be given without any effort

being spared. This I would like to assure these brothers and sisters. Friends, the task of rehabilitation of these people and the villages is going to be stupendous. So I would appeal to one and all to contribute liberally to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. So that we could take up whatever work is to be done by way of rehabilitation at the earliest and thus I said we are not going to spare any effort whatsoever. So I send my sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families and I once again express my determination that in spite of the enormity of this tragedy, we will get over it; we will face it and we will do whatever is necessary to the extent practicable to rehabilitate the affected persons in these areas.

Swami Vivekananda —a True Liberal

I FEEL HONOURED to have the opportunity to address such a distinguished gathering as this and to inaugurate the Centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda's participation in the Chicago Parliament of Religions.

Nearly a year ago, in the closing days of 1992, I had the good fortune to speak at a similar gathering in Kanyakumari on the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda's *Bharat Parikrama* and the Chicago address. While inaugurating the Rashtra Chetna Varsh on the occasion, I had put to myself and my audience one question, "How can we relate the truly liberal vision of Swami Vivekananda to the dissemination of Rashtra Chetna in our country today?"

This question becomes all the more relevant, all the more pressing and compelling today, because there is a deliberate attempt to show Swami Vivekananda exactly as what he was not, exactly as the

Inaugural address at the Centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda's participation in the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago, New Delhi, 9 October 1993

opposite of what he was. He is sought to be depicted as a fanatic himself. Nothing could be farther from the truth. No worse travesty of the truth could be imagined and nothing could be a worse disservice to spirituality in general, and Swami Vivekananda in particular, than what has been attempted in the last one or two months. I don't give details, it is well known. So we have now only to learn Swami Vivekananda, know Swami Vivekananda, it has fallen to our lot to save Swami Vivekananda—this is the situation today—save from being communalised, completely distorted, misinterpreted and perhaps being shown as someone whom humanity will no longer be interested to remember. This is the danger I find today before us.

The answer, I know, was not easy then and it is not easy now. But its urgency remains as I have just explained. A closer look at the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda and a deeper understanding of our own society will help us move towards an answer or an appropriate answer; we don't have exact answers to anything in life.

When we think of Swami Vivekananda, we think of a man who was in continual search of truth and universal understanding. The spiritual order of Ramakrishna Mission, named after his illustrious *Guru*, thus has as its goal not only salvation through meditation but also finding God in the service of the suffering human beings. We know Ramakrishna Mission and the work of the Mission too well not to understand this, not to appreciate this very important aspect of the Mission. Wherever there is calamity, wherever there is need, you will find Ramakrishna Mission present, perhaps reaching there earlier than everyone else. So, the missionary spirit of the Ramakrishna Mission is the first thing that attracts anyone as its most important characteristic sought for any publicity. They are silently working and working wonders. That is the difference—a Mission with a difference.

Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his disciple Swamiji represent the eternal soul of India. Swamiji's Chicago address had a profound impact because it revealed for the first time, succinctly but eloquently, the soul of India to an audience which knew little of India and thought less of it. We all know about the penury that the young man Narendra

Nath Dutta had to go through. As a young man, he found it difficult after the death of his father, to provide for his family. Yet the daily sufferings did not discourage this man from embarking on his journey in search of truth. It is this passion which took him from one *Guru* to another till he met Ramakrishna, who could give an answer to his simple but very difficult question, "Have you seen God?"

It is this search for truth which inspired him to undertake the *Bharat Parikrama*, which gave him a first hand experience of the Indian reality, her material poverty coexisting with her spiritual richness. I still say that the best educator in India is India itself. A person who is confined to his own State or his own district or his own village is what they call *koopmandook*; let him get out of it, see India, leave alone the world, in all its vividness. That is why the institution of *Vanaprastha*, the institution of the monks, the missionaries going from place to place not because they are simply wanting to move, but in that movement there is so much of education. So, this institution, this tradition in India was founded on the basis of widening the horizons of man and that is how he started *Parikrama* and, I have no doubt, that great as he was, he learnt, he must have learnt, a great many things from this *Parikrama*.

Swamiji was a product of the renaissance period of Bengal. The rumblings of reformation were already being heard and protests against moribund religious rituals were taking different forms. We have had so many reformers in India. I don't know what would have happened without them. They have been applying correctives from time to time. The entire literature of the *sadhus*, of those who came from the humble masses and still gave a message, was so forceful, so powerful, that it transformed the society of their times. These are the people who have been the controllers of the Indian society. There is something flying in the air, you sit in the laboratory and you apply whatever is needed, pressing buttons, adjusting things so that it is on course, it doesn't get out of course, it doesn't wobble out, it doesn't tumble out. That is what they did, these great reformers—Kabir, Dadu, Dayal—all these people, in all parts of India. This is how the self-correcting mechanism in our culture, in our religion, in our spirituality has been functioning and

the greatest of the correctors was Swami Vivekananda. Sometimes, it was the Young Bengal movement in which young men looked towards the West for salvation. Sometimes, it was breaking away from the Hindu religious mainstream and forming a new religion like 'Brahmoism,' shorn off day to day Hindu rituals. However, one of the strong ingredients of the renaissance movement was its social aspect. That is why Kabir said :

जात न पूछो साधु की, पूछ लीजिये ज्ञान ।
मोल करो तलवार का, पड़ी रहन दो म्यान ।।

What simpler, a more graphic description of these empty rituals can we find? A very simple language, extremely effective in its impact.

It was in Swamiji that the ancient and the modern met perfectly. *Guru* Ramakrishna, a self-taught man without much formal education, represented the distilled wisdom of the Indian civilization. He symbolised the quiet, unostentatious sageness of Indian wisdom which recognises the essential plurality of the paths that can lead us to the truth. He recognised that the goal in search for truth is the realisation of self, for this is the final stage in the long process of enlightenment.

It should be very obvious, even to a child, that the world is not moulded, that mankind is not moulded in one mould. There are so many faces, so many natures, so many voices. On a telephone you can find out whose voice it is at the other end. The quality of the voice is so different from person to person. Everything is so different from person to person. There are no two things identical, no men or women are identical in this world. This is the kind of God's creation. Can we not understand this simple truth, that the fact remains that in spite of all this variety, they are all human beings? What is so difficult in understanding this? Water can start from anywhere but, ultimately, whatever is left reaches the sea—*Akashat patitam toyam, yatha gachhati sagaram*. I can trace the water in my village falling over the leaves of my house, to the Bay of Bengal easily. Where this water goes; from one tank to the second tank, the third tank, the tail tank and then goes into a tributary of Godavari, and then to Godavari, and on to the Bay of

Bengal. This is how it is. It should be very easy if only we could remove the prejudice that is built, unfortunately, from childhood itself in many cases. If that prejudice is not built, and some kind of tolerance is built in people, which is what our tradition always teaches, always taught us but somehow over the years, over the centuries that teaching seems to have evaporated and given place to something which is based on hatred, based on looking down on the other fellow, on the other religion or the other tradition and so on. Once this hiatus comes, there is no end to it and this hiatus can and does lead to utter anarchy eventually.

It is this aspect of the Indian civilization that Swamiji projected before the West. As he said in his very first address in Chicago and we heard from this young Swami Vivekananda there, "We believe not only in universal toleration but we accept all religions as true." If we accept all religions as true, then why are you quarreling? What is the idea? Is this a tournament? There is something serious in life and you agree with something and you say everything is equal, this is equal to that, therefore, that should be equal to this. Why is it that these walls are being raised? Why is it that in the name of religion so much of irreligiosity is being perpetrated on mankind, and particularly in India where it should never happen? In saying this, he was underlining the essence of Indian civilization. Swamiji's idea of universal toleration can be best understood from his own words. "I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammadan; I shall enter a Christian church and kneel before the crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhist temple where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the light which enlightens the heart of everyone."

Now, what is the difficulty, what is the *jhhagda*? We can go everywhere. I don't think there is any place of worship which is prohibited. It is not a question of going, the question is what do you get from there. You can go to a church, you can go to a gurudwara, what do you get back from there? What is the motivation you get? If that motivation is one of equality of all religions, one of choosing the essence, taking the essence and leaving the inessentials, then there should be no problem.

This aspect of *Sarva Dharma Samabhava*, which we call 'secularism' today, equal respect for all religions, is a unique contribution of our country to the world. It is amazing how people cannot understand secularism. They may be having different religions in their countries but still, from their point of view, it is an aggregate of different religions. From our point of view, it is not an aggregate, it is not an arithmetical aggregate—one plus one plus one—it is not like that; it is something much above the aggregate, and that is what we consider secularism is. Our secularism is neither atheistic, nor irreligious. It is not even indifferent to religion. It accepts religion as a vital element in the life of an individual for so it is in India and among the vast majority of the people of the world. It then goes a step further and recognises, in the spirit of the long-held Indian tradition, that there can be more than one true religion and all of them should be shown due deference. This deference is as much to God, who we realise in our own humble way can be worshipped in more ways than one, as to the dignity of the individual whose freedom of thought, belief, faith and worship is an essential part of his freedom and equality.

Ramakrishna Mission has performed a major nation-building task by spreading the message of Swamiji, particularly among the children and youth. Youth is idealistic and energetic. This is the time of dreams and aspirations. Our achievements in later years are closely linked to the way we utilise our time when we are young. Swamiji was only thirty when he addressed the Parliament of Religions and his life has been an inspiration for generations of Indians and others. Probably it was young Vivekananda who alone could address this Chicago convention the way he did. Maybe if it had been an older person, his phraseology and everything would have been different and perhaps not so impressive. It will continue to be so for many more generations. Swami Vivekananda represents the eternal youth of India.

Swamiji's contribution was not merely in the spiritual field. He did not merely present and interpret India's religious wisdom to the world. He was a man who influenced religion as much as religion influenced him. He was a man of change. He was an activist. Social reform was an intrinsic part of his message. The parallel with Mahatma

Gandhi cannot go unnoticed here. Their deep religiosity did not make them blind to the need for change in several social and ritualistic aspects of religion. In this again, they continued a long standing Indian tradition, dormant at times, but never dead. Religion is always perceived as a living being that grows and develops with the times—its spiritual and metaphysical content by constant intellectual discourse and meditation and its social aspect by the changes in the physical environment around us.

This social zeal adds to Swamiji's relevance to us today. His religion was “service to the *Daridranarayana*”, service to the suffering humanity. It was not pity that prompted him to serve the needy. It was his way of serving God. The whole philosophy of *Karma Yoga* was brought into focus by Swami Vivekananda in a way that people could understand. Serve mankind in whatever way you can, he seemed to say, without any ulterior motive. That is the surest way to attain truth.

Such inspiration has always motivated our young men and women to come out to help whenever there has been any crisis, be it famine or war or earthquake. It is this sense of service that has taken organisations like Ramakrishna Mission to every corner of the world; whenever calamity has caused sufferings, Swamiji revived for us this human dimension of religion. We have to nurture this revival and promote it further.

As we remember this great man today, let us recall the last few words that he spoke in the Parliament of Religions. He said, “Holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any Church in the world and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character.” How challenging these words were in the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 ! It can only be imagined. Today, it looks very common. Everyone says this. But for him to say this all the way in America, in Chicago, having gone there and in this challenging fashion is something absolutely marvellous. We are not even able to imagine the real magnitude of this. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of others, I pity him from the bottom of my

heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance : 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace, and not Dissension.' I think, you cannot think of a more relevant, a more apt statement than this from today's point of view, leave alone a hundred years ago. So, it seems he was able to think of something which will be relevant always. The proof is that it is equally relevant a hundred years after he said it.

Need to End Inter-Tribal Rivalry

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to meet you all and to inaugurate this meeting of the Tribal Development Council. I am fully aware of the issues placed before you and before me. I have been in the midst of the Adivasis for twenty years because the constituency which sent me to the Andhra Pradesh Assembly had a sizeable tribal component. I remember the time when I went to that constituency for the first time. The Communist Party was carrying on an armed struggle. Whenever their leaders visited the area or even when the news reached the people that they would be visiting them, the people's hearts would become restless. Nobody opened his doors nor would any door open after dark. When these leaders came and went nobody knew. The news of their arrival would, however, create a sensation. Such was the constituency which fell to my lot.

I observed that despite all these things, the people were guileless and straightforward. If they said something they would act on it. A senior minister of that time was with us when we went to a village in that area and asked some people who were summoned, what they needed. I am telling you exactly what happened and not a word has been added by me. The people stared at the minister and me and said they did not

want anything. The minister loved me like his son. With tears in his eyes he told me I had been given a constituency where the people did not know what they wanted. This was nothing but backwardness. It was unimaginable that people could say they did not want anything. I cannot imagine a greater amount of backwardness than this.

For five years I paid special attention to that village, the pond was repaired, the canal was set right, everything needed to be done was done. Then I again visited the village after five years. I felt as though half its population had become barristers. They asked me such questions that I could not reply. I told them if they could make so much progress in just five years, not merely in economic development but in the understanding of current problems, our Adivasis had really won the battle. What do they need? First of all, they need consciousness, awareness—we have to let them know that they have rights, they are citizens of this country, they have the same rights as enjoyed by other people and it is the duty of the government to give them those rights, fulfil their demands and meet their requirements. ‘It is our right and we shall achieve it,’ must be their feeling.

I am relating to you what I experienced in my constituency. This must also be the story of other Adivasi villages. It is a common tale. For any backward area the requirement is that there should be an awakening. It is my conviction that our Adivasi brethren are now sufficiently awake and they can no longer be stopped. There will be obstructions, some people will try to stop them from going forward, try to suppress them, try to prevent their economic conditions from improving, and try to keep them backward, but I am sure the tribal people can no longer be stopped from marching ahead.

There was another phase from which I wish to relate some experience. The Naxalite agitation was quite strong in areas which are known as Adivasi areas and it is still going on in some pockets, in some areas. You are aware of it. Those days when the Naxalite agitation was strong I was the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, and when I wished to visit one such area our people were trying to stop me. Although the Commissioner, the police and others advised me against

the visit, I insisted that I must go and finally my programme was chalked out. We visited a village but, before the visit, I was told by some people who lived there, that they would like to submit a representation to me and honour me outside the village. This made me think, why these people were coming out of the village when I was going there to meet the people. When I made inquiries, I was told that they were not the tribal people but non-tribals who had settled there for some time. I told the officials that I would first go to the tribal brethren. I went to the village and there I discovered that the group which was plundering the Adivasis was waiting for me outside the village and was trying to catch me first. What I am telling you is the literal truth and what I have experienced. When I heard the complaints of the tribals I chose not to go at all to the other group and they were informed that if they had anything to tell me they should go to Hyderabad, but I would not meet them in the tribal area.

This plunder of the tribals has continued despite the special laws made for the tribal agency areas about land rights. I suppose such laws must have been applied in all the tribal areas. I am definitely aware of some agencies and you would be surprised to know that these laws were enforced even in the British days. Later, we amended them and improved their provisions. But the history of the past years shows that these laws have been in a way violated and the number of non-tribals in the tribal areas has gone on increasing. You can look up the Census figures. We could not stop it. The reason was that those who were assigned the duty of working for the tribals were also non-tribals i.e. officers, clerks, tehsildars, etc.. It was but natural that the others would dominate and the tribals would remain where they were. What was responsible for this state of affairs was that we do not know whether at that time there were any educated persons among the tribals or not. From what I know, there were very few among the Adivasis those days who could work as clerks or become tehsildars, of course, there could have been a mistake in this matter. On the one hand we kept insisting on the civil servants that only such and such people should be posted in the tribal areas and we could not use the local people, the intelligent people and the leaders among the tribals. We kept on applying the same yardstick as in the other general areas. On the other

hand, we did not get those whom we had wanted to go to the tribal areas because the able persons who got the transfer orders would manœuvre to remain where he was or get a city posting and avoid going to the forests. Only the inefficient, condemned people would get posted there. This was the condition of the administration and we have passed through all these circumstances.

I accept that the transformation that has taken place in these tribal areas in the past thirty or forty years could have been speeded up and become deeper. What, however, has taken place is simply wonderful. I cannot describe it in lesser terms. What we need today is that wherever there is a tribal officer there should be no discrimination against him and he should get the deserved scope for progress that he is entitled to. He does not need anything more, he does not need any favours, he needs justice. If he is treated fairly he is bound to go ahead.

This is what you and I have learnt by experience. It is a good thing that the tribal people did not have to depend on the mercy of anybody in selecting their representatives, or in sending them to Parliament or the Assemblies. Dr B.R. Ambedkar, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and all our leaders of that era, who fashioned our Constitution, thought that if the tribal people and the Scheduled Castes did not get reservations and if they had to depend on the mercies of others for representation in the Assemblies, this might not happen at all. Because of reservations, a small number of these people are in the various Legislatures, right before us, by our side, as our equals. When they say, 'this must be done', we have to listen to them. This is a very good development. Otherwise they would not be heard. I can say it with full confidence that but for reservations, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes would not be heard at all. For hundreds of years, not merely today, there have been people in our society who have built their prosperity on the exploitation of others. If there was no provision for reservations, this exploitative class would have carried the day. In my view reservations should continue as long as these people themselves say they do not need reservations.

They would definitely say it one day. When they become the equals of all others, reservations would cause them some embarrassment and they would feel, why they should depend on reservations and they would want to feel free. When they feel equal to others they would be actuated by the spirit of equality and they would surely say that they no longer need reservations, which should be ended. That would happen only when the area would open up and the tribals and others would establish contact. Along with such mingling, the tribal people wish to protect and preserve their culture, their way of life and all that, and our Constitution has guaranteed such protection. It is difficult to open up your areas and still keep yourself protected from the outside influences. It would appear as though there is a contradiction here, but really speaking there is none. Think about it in some depth. There are some countries in the world who have abandoned their own culture and have assimilated the culture of others, and since it is their decision about which we have nothing to say. But there are others which have rivalled the most advanced nations in terms of economic progress but they have not given up their own culture. They have preserved it and have proved that progress and preserving one's culture have nothing to do with each other. Go to Japan and you will see this with your own eyes. There are other countries too which have preserved their culture and yet have attained a high level of economic development leaving others behind. Our Constitution makers thought likewise and provided for the preservation of the tribals' culture while they march along the road of economic progress, as has happened in some other countries.

The contradiction between the two appears when unwise people begin to implement it. We have to orient the thinking of those who have to work in the tribals' midst and make them understand what is progress and what is culture. There is no contradiction between the two and they have to coexist. But we must orient the thinking of those assigned to work in their midst, whether they are officers or others. This is very essential. If we achieve that, there is no reason why the two should not go hand in hand. I have seen some tribes in whose small huts you get the feeling as though marble was laid there. Their houses are so spic and span. There could be a drain near the house and the surrounding area may not be so clean but once you are inside the house you would

realise that these people belong to some great civilization. Uncivilized people cannot live like this. Not only the huts and houses, but the other tribal ways are much civilized, more so than the ways of the people of the cities or of other places. This is not so apparent and you have to study it carefully and you have to live with them. I have had the opportunity of living with them for twenty years. So I know that their ways and style are neat and clean, healthy and so much in accord with our tradition.

Many of these things are not known to us. Can any Indian claim that he knows India completely? No such claim can be made. So vast is our country and such is its complexity and so much variety. But from whatever we can see, we can say that our Adivasi brethren have a distinguishing feature, a distinguishing culture. This has been coming down for centuries and we understand the propriety of preserving it. Our Founding Fathers were aware of it and we have to act on it.

There is, however, an issue to which I must advert—the rivalry among the tribals and the resulting violence. You would have to go into who is responsible for this violence, what is Manipur's condition today and what is the condition of some other States, what is the defect in that great culture of the tribals which has now erupted, what distortion has taken place—these are questions which have to be answered. It won't do to go on praising you, although you deserve praise. But this is something you have to look into, turn the searchlight inward why a tribe is indulging in bloody conflict with another. The Government is worried, leaders are worried and all of us are concerned that this conflict creates a bad impression of our country in the outside world. There must, of course, be forces interested in their quarrel. People do not just come to blows like that. There is some party interested in keeping them at loggerheads and thus achieving its own ends. This matter has also to be investigated. I would like to tell you that the progress of the entire tribal community would come to a stop if this inter-tribal rivalry is not put to an end and a proper understanding is not created among them.

These events are distressing and the reports which we receive everyday go to show that there are elements among them which are

interested in making them fight, to achieve one does not know what. Perhaps they seek their own benefit. But can peace not redound to their benefit, cannot brotherly relations not bring benefit, can only fighting yield this benefit? Since you are holding a session here you should debate this issue to find out what benefit they seek in killing one another. How you are going to settle the inter-tribal rivalries, by holding a panchayat or otherwise is a matter for you to decide. If such rivalries could be settled by mutual discussion among you I would be very happy about it. For some matters you may like to go to court or any tribal body, or an authority. What I want is that this violence must stop and the ways have to be found by you and you should tell me about it after mutual consultation.

We have violence of every kind in our country but if tribal violence is added to that, this country and our society will not be able to bear it. India has earned a bad name and there is no need to add to it. We have to look into the matter and find out how the conflict could be stopped from spreading and how it can be ended. What should be the machinery for finding a solution? I would not say that all of you should go to the Supreme Court. If the tribals do not have enough to eat how could they afford the expenditure of going to the Supreme Court and the cost of engaging a lawyer. This is far from being a practical solution. We had in our villages some machinery for settlement of disputes and perhaps it still exists. Not everyone runs to a court from his village, to the magistrate's court or the district court, much less to the Supreme Court. What happened in our village communities? There were village elders who sat together and settle disputes. It happens even now.

So, these inter-tribal rivalries must be settled in this manner and an effort should be made to bring peace to the tribal area concerned. In those areas where killing goes on, there is a big market in arms; a racket is in progress there and you can get the kind of gun or the make you prefer. When I see these developments, I feel that the purity and simplicity that we associated with the tribal communities has now been spoilt and has been influenced by these evil forces. In this conference I would like you to consider from where these evil influences are

emanating, why they have penetrated the tribal areas and what should be done to end them. I would, indeed, be grateful to you if you find a solution.

Netaji's Vision of India

EXACTLY FIFTY YEARS ago tomorrow the Interim Government of Azad Hind was formed by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at Singapore. We are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of this Interim Government. The formation of this Government in exile was the culmination of the efforts of Netaji to mobilise all Indians outside India in those days to organise them to wage a war against the British Government, to gain victory and then go on to form the permanent national Government of India.

The Provisional Government of Azad Hind received spontaneous and overwhelming response and support from Indians all over the world. Thousands of people joined the Indian National Army and then Netaji declared that the immediate goal of the new Government was winning independence.

Netaji's vision of India after independence was that of a democratic and secular country in which every citizen had equal rights, in which there could be no discrimination of any kind, in which there would be complete religious liberty to the citizens. In fact, what all has been actually done in India after independence and particularly after the promulgation of our Constitution was exactly what Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had wanted and the same thing is happening and in a way what he dreamed has come true.

A day after the proclamation of the Provisional Government, Netaji formed the Rani Jhansi Regiment of women soldiers. You may recall that the Rani Jhansi Regiment had become very famous, almost overnight, because it was the first time the people saw that women of India were participating in large numbers in the freedom struggle on the basis of forming a part of the Army. The idea was that along with men, women should march hand in hand and also get the kind of self-confidence that is needed for performing the duties, the arduous duties of soldiers in the Army. It is not surprising that so many men and women responded to his call for giving their blood for the independence of their motherland.

Two days after its formation, the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, declared a war of independence against the greatest Imperialist power of the day, namely the British Empire. 16,000 soldiers lost their lives. It was perhaps a massive number of persons who voluntarily laid down their lives and a great sacrifice on the part of these people. Netaji and his heroic INA rekindled the national self-respect and self-confidence of every Indian. The charismatic leadership of Netaji showed that Indian men and women could challenge any power in the world and were inferior to none.

Netaji was a democrat at heart who always put the nation's interest above all else. He saw his Provisional Government as a force working in tandem with all patriotic forces in the country. He spoke very highly of Mahatma Gandhi because he respected him very much. He sought Mahatma Gandhi's blessings for the success of the Azad Hind Fauj and the Interim Government. Although their ways were different and in those days every one knew that their opinions on the method of carrying out the struggle differed, yet the personal relationship of affection between the two was something remarkable. Netaji called Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation.

So, the Interim Government really represented the aspirations of all people of India whether inside or outside and that is why it has become immortal. It has been etched in the minds of people of India ever since. Mahatma Gandhi also had great affection and regard for

Netaji. So, this relationship is something one should take note of as between persons holding very different views on a particular subject and yet trying to help each other or expressing regard for each other so that the personal relationship is not affected.

We have attained independence. We have fashioned a Constitution which is very much like what Netaji wanted it to be. Now it is for us to protect this freedom, to make Netaji's dreams come true in every sense of the term. Netaji said many inspiring things. He was a great patriot who inspired millions of people, literally millions of youngmen in those days and it is that inspiration that is continuing today in many who read about him and who know about him. It is our duty now to follow in his footsteps and to do what he really wanted done in independent India.

Indira Gandhi—a Citizen of Our Single Earth

I DEEM IT a great privilege to address this distinguished gathering on this very special day.

Through the ages, men of vision and social commitment have engaged in the task of defining a good society and, in some cases, of recommending social arrangements which they believed were necessary to translate their vision into reality. Ideologies, anchored in the assurance of the realisation of an ideal state of existence, have inspired generations of humanity. The dream of such a society is the object of the yearning of human beings. Even if never attained fully, it is a valuable reassertion of the direction in which the leaders of the society

should steer it through their effort and example—which is followed by others, as stated in the *Gita*—

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः । स यत्प्रमाणम् कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ।

Such intellectual exercises can yield prescient observations on the human condition and about preferred futures and well-rounded theoretical frameworks that offer both a critique of the existing dispensation and a blueprint for the future. Smt Indira Gandhi, whose birthday we celebrate today, was one of those great Indians who dedicated a lifetime to the uplift of the people of their country. Her undaunted courage and single-minded devotion to the country will remain for ever a source of inspiration to us. But her patriotism was not jingoistic. She wanted India's greatness to be universal in outlook, a shared relationship. In 1980 she had said in her convocation address in Delhi University :

“India's greatness has been her genius for synthesis of cultures and ideas. Through the ages, she has opened wide, her doors to all who came, whether to learn, to teach or for refuge. It is not by putting restrictions of isolating oneself that one grows but by wider contacts and interaction with fresh thoughts and new strains. Those cultures have survived and become richer which have welcomed and encouraged such expanding experiences.”

All social ideas, theories and blueprints are necessarily products of their times. Those who formulate them do so , not in a vacuum but in response to their material and social circumstances and in the context of the configuration of power and responsibility, both within their own countries and between states in the world system. It is important to remember this, for there is a tendency to believe that pre-fabricated models of social engineering exist, which can take care of all problems of a country or of humankind, if only they are implemented. There are no social blueprints, which are valid for all times and good in all contexts. And yet there is no denying the fact that there are elements in the social philosophies propounded by people of great wisdom and social commitment, which represent certain values and principles

having validity across time and space. To the extent of these agreed values, the good society does not need to be redefined—only rediscovered.

The intellectual freedom to forge ideological constructs, based purely on a priori rationalisation is a luxury not always available to a politician, for whom all prescriptions have to be grounded in the reality of the day and the social parameters, which circumscribe thoughts and action. This is not to say that a political leader is for ever a prisoner of the social environment in which he functions. The ability to break new ground even by ploughing a lonely furrow where necessary, is really an important attribute of leadership. This needs the strength of conviction and a knowledge of the society's ills, as also the vision of a better world. Theirs is a difficult challenge, for they have to achieve within the brief interludes between election, their assurances of a better future, harmonising the requirements of tomorrow with those of the longer term.

The framers of our Constitution were confronted with a similar dilemma in reconciling their dream of a modern, egalitarian India with the immediate capabilities of the state. They resolved it by creating a body of fundamental rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. These constitute the political framework of the good society they wished to see in the country, whose rebirth they had brought about.

The Constitution that we adopted in 1950 is both comprehensive and resilient. While it, indeed, employs concepts and institutional arrangements found in other democracies, the over-arching social philosophy that informs it, is a finely honed body of legal prescriptions for a well-defined goal. The reformist thrust of the modernists was moulded with the desire to maintain continuity with age-old Indian traditions and institutions. The humanism of Mahatma Gandhi was given expression in legal and political terms. The poor and the deprived were given a definite status and dispensation of dignity in the new polity. Panchayati Raj and the idea of Grama Swaraj, which had been the bedrock of the autonomy of Indian villages for centuries, were planned to be revived as the basal complement of democracy.

This is the kind of basic document which has helped us chart our course in the period after independence. As many would agree, we have attained a measure of success in realising the objective of establishing a fair and right society. And yet there is no gainsaying the fact that we still have a long stretch of difficult ground to cover, before we can claim to have translated this primary objective, in full measure, into reality. Unlike constitutions, polities are not legislated into existence; they evolve by itself, a good basic law does not produce an effective and stable polity. There are numerous other factors that also matter, turning the making of a polity into a long drawn and often tortuous process.

The fathers of our Constitution appear to have been fully cognizant of this fact. This is the reason why, for instance, while the Constitution provides for the full range of freedoms and rights that democratic states give to their citizens, it also, at the same time, places conditions on their exercise. Likewise, there is a separate and elaborate section of the Constitution which lists several social and economic objectives without whose realisation we cannot have a humane society and a just state.

Establishing a democratic state is in essence a political project. It involves the mobilisation of groups and interests in support of this enterprise. It requires additionally the forging of bonds between different sections of society so as to create a nation-wide political community which would not only respect the authority of the state but also sustain and strengthen it. Historically, those entrusted with this task have invariably encountered inimical forces and groups with interests and demands, preferences and commitments, that tend to impede the process of setting up a state which is both effective and democratic. These impediments have to be overcome and the groups responsible for them need to be coaxed, cajoled or isolated so that the task of building the state is carried forward. In democratic polities the preferred mode of doing all this is one which involves persuasion, negotiation and accommodation of different view points. Coercion and force are sought to be avoided and deployed only as the last resort, when all other methods have failed.

The task of building an effective state in the newly independent countries is a difficult one, whatever be the nature of the regime. But it becomes doubly difficult when it is undertaken within the framework of a pluralist and competitive democracy, such as India's. The burdens of this task are enormous. Indeed, in many of the new states, which emerged after the Second World War, attempts to operate within a democratic framework were abandoned within a few years of obtaining independence. In many cases authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes were set up to attain the objective of economic and political development.

Economic growth and political rights have been seen as complementary fruits of independence. Political freedom was never meant to act as an impediment to progress. In fact, it was deemed an essential precondition for it. The benefits of economic growth cannot become meaningful or be equitably distributed unless accompanied by a matching and appropriate political dispensation.

Individual rights and social controls have presented humankind with a problem of reconciliation that has never been easy to resolve. Societies have curbed individual freedom for the sake of what they perceived as the common welfare and civil order. These are enforced through such institutions as the family, religion, caste, the state etc. There has never been an accepted line that has defined the desirable limit of social control. Certainly, people who have revolted against such controls either violently or through a more peaceful process of reform have expressed their resentment against what they perceived as an undesirable overstepping of that undefined line. Besides, what is considered a necessary control at one point of time is seen later as unnecessary and even draconian and unjustified, depending on the evolution of the social spirit and a sense of effective independence achieved during a given period. It appears, therefore, that while social control will remain in some form or quantum always, the line at which that control ends, is a highly mobile and flexible one. It is in the fine-tuning of this line that the skill, perspicacity and social perceptiveness of a given leadership at a given time are put to real test.

More difficult to identify is the breakdown of such basic units of society as the family under the relentless pressure of individuals asserting their personal rights with little concern for the common weal. Such extreme individualism debilitates society and few human values can survive in the infertile environment of 'each for himself'. The alarming effects of self-aggrandisement can be seen in several modern societies even though they may not always be recognised as such or lend themselves to easy solutions. But the absence of a solution does not negate a problem. On the other hand, not recognising or admitting it certainly aggravates it.

As Mahatma Gandhi had said: "Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have to learn to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint."

This problem can be resolved if the individual and society are not seen as conflicting entities. As Pandit Nehru said in 1954:

"The test of an individual is how he treats his wife, his son and his neighbour. How he behaves towards another, how he functions in a social relationship—that is the test of the individual."

A good society not only balances individualism with the common good, but seeks to synthesise them in such a way that each complements the other, each reinforces the other.

Religion has traditionally been a strong binding force in society and has provided it a valuable measure of moral commandments to regulate behaviour. In the modern age the breakdown of the religious order in several societies has paradoxically been accompanied by an alarming rise in fundamentalism in others, sometimes in other sections of the same society. There is a body of do's and don'ts that are imbibed instinctively, by example within the family and the locality rather than by inculcation, explanation or teaching. Religion is a natural and convenient medium for such imbibing. To that extent, the breakdown of religion tends to make a society rather chaotic where nothing is obligatory, nothing is taboo. Out of such chaos, particularly when it has

gone too far and has become intolerable, there emerges an extra harsh, compelling intolerant force which in itself would never have been accepted in normal circumstances, but which suddenly offers relief from the prevailing chaos and is, therefore, not only tolerated, but welcomed and adopted. Liberal religion gets weak and its fundamentalist version takes over, inevitably leading to other extreme consequences.

Providing a framework which steers clear of these fluctuations and a sense of security, and combines moderation with cohesion is a great necessity today. Religious regimentation is neither possible nor desirable. Equally undesirable is an irreverent attitude of cynicism towards religion. Our concept of *Sarva Dharma Samabhava*, regarding all religions equally, in which moderation and toleration are naturally involved, is the only answer which meets the individual's urge for religious faith and the state's anxiety not to interfere in it.

Even as we are engaged in the task of building a dynamic and vibrant economy to ensure prosperity for our people, we fully share the widespread concern for preserving our environment. At the Rio Conference on Environment and Development, I had pointed out that we are also clear in our mind that we cannot have conservation of the environment without the promise of development, even as we cannot have sustained development without the preservation of the environment. There is a world of abundance where plenty brings pollution but there is also a world of want where deprivation degrades life. For the countries of the South, to which India belongs, the elimination of conditions of deprivation cannot but be at the top of our agenda. But even as we seek to eliminate deprivation, we remain sensitive to the danger of despoiling the environment and depleting non-replenishable resources. To us both approaches are complementary and represent the two sides of the same coin.

Right now, there is a dialogue on, between the developed and the developing countries and both are engaged in finding a rational and practicable framework of economic development that is both sustainable and satisfying. The solution is not yet quite in sight. It is bound

to elude us for a considerable time. But what is certain is that the question of environment has brought in a whole set of new parameters which set limits to material progress as we understand it today. If unlimited exploitation of Mother Earth's limited resources has been interpreted as 'progress' so far, I think this definition—which itself is not correct by any criterion—needs to be changed forthwith. Perhaps, something other than material needs to be included in the total package which is called human progress.

Gandhiji foresaw the havoc that the despoilation of the environment would cause if the symbiotic relationship of man and nature was disrupted. His faith in non-violence extended beyond human relations in society and he believed that the bond between the human being and nature should similarly draw its strength from non-violence. He also categorically said that nature has enough for man's need, but cannot cater fully to man's greed. The Gandhian ethos is deeply ingrained in the Indian psyche. Notwithstanding our limited resources we are trying as best as we can to promote development without degrading the environment. It is, however, not easy to do so when, as our late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi observed at the Belgrade Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, those inhabiting the world of abundance and plenty do not come forward to share the financial burden for accessing environment-friendly technologies.

This sharing is necessary, for a whole new range of such technologies will have to be developed and the technologies that are presently in operation will either have to be made environment-friendly or discarded. With large parts of the world passing through a phase of upheaval and turmoil and leading economies in the North facing their own problems, the prospects for such cooperation do not appear very good at the moment. Even so, attempts to pool the experience, knowledge, skills and other resources to protect the environment should continue. On our part India pledges to do all it can in this regard.

In today's world we cannot spell out our vision of a good society independently of similar exercises by other peoples and societies. The

changes occurring are so rapid and profound that they challenge our old assumptions and render the old modes of thought and action considerably inadequate to the demands of the new era. There can be no separate futures in this emerging world. If we move together, there is hope for everyone. The sages of ancient India had expressed this common bond in the words—*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*—all humanity is one extended family.

In the same breath, the sage had also set down categorical conditions that would make such a global family possible. The couplet runs as follows:

अयं निजः परोवेति गणना लघुचेतसाम्
उदार चरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुंबकम्

meaning—‘The differentiation of what is mine and what is thine is found only in those who are petty-minded. For those who are of noble character, the whole world is one family.’ Thus for any world view to become possible, a noble and a wide vision on the part of world leaders is a *sine qua non*. The question, therefore, boils down to what in modern times has come to be referred to as political will. Today, this is a reality with a new compelling urgency. It is, therefore, for us to realise our common destiny together.

Indian thinkers, just as thinkers everywhere, have tried to delineate a good society for many millenia. Hundreds of seers and intellectuals have pondered over the matter and described a good society's attributes in myriad ways. Some stressed some aspects while others laid emphasis on others. It is impossible to catalogue all these or to draw definite conclusions from the plethora of views and maxims. However, I am impressed by one particularly simple and short formulation which, I think, sums up everything that is worth mentioning. That formula is:

अनायासेन मरणम्
विना दैन्येन जीवनम्

It is remarkable that the seer begins with a painless death as an objective, a good society should strive for. There is a lot implied in this cryptic phrase. It covers the whole gamut of health and well-being and perhaps much more. Incidentally, the Indian lore links a painful death with sin and painless death with a virtuous life. This may not be simply metaphysics, it could also be a good principle which we are discovering very slowly. Our doctors are saying that all the epidemics have been vanquished but what we are not able to vanquish are the ways of life that are leading to all kinds of waste. So I think, we are coming back to the Indian view after a lot of confusion everywhere and a lot of discussion everywhere. Both the physical and the spiritual aspects are comprehended in the phrase and one could expand it further, to describe what a good society should mean to anyone who belongs to it.

The second part is even more comprehensive. A good society should provide for life without what is described as *dainya*. My vocabulary fails me in finding an equivalent in English for *dainya*. It could mean want. It could mean dependence. It could mean a state of helplessness. It could also mean a situation which prevents an individual from attaining his full stature. It represents many situations, which, singly or in combination, make a man unhappy or cause distress to him. One could perhaps give many more examples of what could aptly be described as *dainya*. The concept thus includes the social, political and economic aspects of what a good society should rid an individual of. It is also noteworthy that instead of a positive definition, the maxim resorts to a negative, exclusivist definition. What a good society should not allow to happen, that is, should avoid, should eradicate, should banish; that is defined in a more concrete form here. To remove something undesirable is easier than introducing something positive but abstract. It, therefore, seems to be a more practical approach to the essential tasks of a good society. This comprehensive death-cum-life concept is a household phrase in India. To be exact, I heard this exactly 68 years ago—when I was five years old—from my grandmother. This is a household thing. Everybody remembers it. Everybody knows it. No great scholarship is needed to know it and perhaps to comprehend it to some extent. In any event, I make bold

to present it to this gathering as a most pregnant and concise definition of what a good society should mean—today or at any time, all the time.

I am confident, the deliberations of this Conference will bring the ideas of the great leaders of India and other countries closer to the people and help us in imbibing at least some of them. In doing so we will be paying our humble tribute to Smt Indira Gandhi who led India to strength and progress and continued to work till her very last breath. By sacrificing her life for the unity and integrity of our country, she set the highest example to the people of India and the world of working for the good of the society by thought, word and deed. This Conference would have been very dear to her. We learnt much from her, much more remains to be learnt. This Conference, dedicated to her memory, will help us in doing so.

It is now my privilege to formally inaugurate this Conference, dedicated to the memory of a great Indian and a citizen of our single earth, and its deliberations on a theme as apposite as her mission and memory.

Need for Providing Speedy Justice

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here with you today and to associate myself with your deliberations on a vital topic, namely the reform of the judicial system to cut down delays.

More than 26 lakh cases are reported to be pending in the Supreme Court and different High Courts in India. The situation in the District Courts and Subordinate Courts in the country is even worse. The figure at the end of 1988 in the courts had reached more than a

crore and a half. The five years thereafter would only have worsened the situation. The urgency of the problem is, thus, evident.

Commitment to the rule of law is the foundation of a civilized society. In our country we have given ourselves a secular and democratic Constitution; a Constitution, that preserves and strengthens all that is good in our traditions and also provides a blueprint for change where it is necessary. The actions of the different organs of our polity—legislative, executive and judicial—must conform to our Constitution. The Constitution distributes powers amongst the various organs. However, for good reasons, it contains certain checks and balances which do not imply subordination of one authority to another. The Constitution expects that the authorities created under it, work in harmony, not in hostility. The strength of our institutions lies in the discharge of their respective functions within the limits, laid down by the Constitution.

The judicial organ of the state is the interpreter of the Constitution and, therefore, of the limits of authority of the different organs of the state. The Judiciary is thus the sentinel of our democracy. It is in this context that one has to examine the problem of how best the judicial process could be worked to achieve effective and speedy justice.

In the course of the last four decades, the reach of municipal law has undergone a qualitative change. There were many stimuli for this change—the requirements of a welfare society, the contemporary social, political and economic challenges, the emergence of internationally recognised human rights, and many more. More recently, our Government has taken significant legislative and administrative measures to bring about considerable liberalisations in our financial system in tune with the requirements. Successful implementation of these measures depends, among other things, on our judicial system serving the needs of constantly changing community and to delivering timely justice.

In recent years, the Judiciary in this country has to attend to the solution of complex problems involving competing social aspirations.

In addressing these problems, our courts have acted with sobriety and impartiality. The courts enjoy the respect and confidence of the public.

It is no doubt a truism that the index of the judicial system cannot be the number of cases disposed of but the number of cases decided justly. If our judicial system has been a success—which it undoubtedly has been—it is only a reflection of the judges who have adorned, and continue to adorn, the Bench. If such a Judiciary comes under the pressure of evergrowing mountains of litigation, the quality of justice is in danger of being affected which will be unfortunate. We have to ensure that this does not happen.

Some of the issues are apparent. First and foremost is the appointment of judges of proven calibre at all levels with promptitude. Equally important is the need to ensure sufficient judicial strength.

Another important consideration would be the need to work out viable and alternative dispute resolution mechanism. With more and more people becoming aware of their rights, the number of people taking recourse to the courts has risen and will continue to rise. This places considerable strain on our formal judicial system. There are also many people who are denied access to the courts or do not want to take recourse to courts on account of a variety of factors including, in particular, the delays.

A vast majority of our people live in rural areas. Their problems and concerns are not necessarily the same as those of the urban population. The rural poor suffer heavily in the absence of a judicial system that is close to them and also responsive to their demands. We should give the highest priority to the question of resolution of disputes at the grass roots level by a system that is simpler, inexpensive and available much closer to the people than it actually is.

My colleague, Bhardwajji has just said something about summary procedures being adopted in cases of rural litigation. I am not quite sure. Being from the rural area, I don't think, I will be satisfied with a kind of second-class justice or something which is inferior to the

normal thing available to the others. The tension between the village and the town—I want you to understand that—there can be no question of accepting anything less than what is the normal, whether it is the smallest village or it is the largest city. So, the quality of justice which is available to the people should be the same. The same thing has happened in the case of schools, if you remember. Over the years, we have been content in giving some kind of second-rate schooling to people in the villages. There have been protests from all sides and today, those who can afford in the villages, they send their children to towns. The village schools are completely impoverished. So, this kind of hiatus should not be allowed to take place. We will have to find a way, a more acceptable way, of making justice available to the people of the rural areas. I am not just saying that we will summarily decide their cases while we will take years and years in deciding the same cases of the same complication or the same nature when they occur in a city or in a regular court. This, I think, is going to be a very ticklish problem.

Non-judicial bodies like the Panchayats have been dispensing justice in rural areas for quite long. Arbitration as an accepted source of dispute resolution has also been in existence in India. In a determined effort to find alternatives to court adjudication, we have established, under our laws, various such alternative dispute resolution fora, for example, in respect of matters relating to direct and indirect taxation, accidents, rent control, government servants and the like. More diversification of such fora would provide an answer for speedier redressal of public grievances. An important recommendation on this behalf has been that of the Arrears Committee, 1989-90, which has recommended that Conciliation Courts should be established all over the country with power, authority and jurisdiction to initiate conciliation proceedings in all types of cases at all levels.

Last but not the least is the increasing awareness of the Government, the judges and the legal fraternity of the need to provide legal aid to the poor. Article 39A of our Constitution is in the nature of a mandate which enjoins upon the state, among other things, to provide free legal aid to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not

denied to any citizen by reason or economic disability. We have today, a Legal Aid Committee presided over by one of the seniormost judges of the Supreme Court working towards the achievement of this end. It appears that more than 40 lakh cases were settled by Lok Adalats and that about 450 crore of rupees were paid to the claimants. The Lok Adalats held over the length and breadth of the country, have today become a part of ensuring a speedy, effective and economical remedy. We hope to give statutory status to Lok Adalats soon.

It is not for me to dilate upon the possible steps that could be taken in the matter of functioning of courts from the point of view of their number, jurisdiction or procedure prevailing therein. I would much prefer to leave it to this assembly of legal experts to determine the best way of suitably adapting the present means to the avowed end of speedier justice. To what extent the jurisdiction of courts should be extended or curtailed, in civil or criminal cases, how procedures in courts should be adapted to meet the unprecedented increase in litigation or how such procedures could be simplified, how judicial work could be handled best and how court techniques could be best improved are only a few of the issues which merit your consideration.

There has been a long standing demand that expenditure on the administration of justice should be made plan expenditure. We have recently approved a scheme relating to infrastructural facilities for the judiciary. The scheme includes construction of buildings, both official and residential, for High Courts and District Courts. The expenditure involved in the implementation of the scheme is to be shared by the Central and the State governments on 50:50 basis. The scheme involves an outlay of Rs. 1200 crore during the Eighth Five Year Plan. For the current financial year, a budget provision of Rs. 30 crore has been made for the scheme. Tentative allocations have also been made and intimated to various States.

I sincerely hope that this unique attempt initiated by my Government to bring the Chief Ministers and the Chief Justices together would succeed in evolving a suitable environment as well as definitive principles, which would restore administration of justice to its pristine

glory, and the most important of all, cut down all avoidable delays in the administration of justice. This happens to be uppermost in everybody's mind and I hope this will be effectively addressed at this conference.

Do Not Exploit Religion

FIRST OF ALL, I ought to bow my head to Bahubali who has called me here, whose blessings have created this opportunity for me to visit this place. I have been to many parts of India but this place, I had not visited so far. Today, I have fulfilled the wish to be here and I feel really blessed that some friends invited me to visit this place, thanks to the inspiration of Bahubali. It is not a new thing in our country that we honour Bahubali who did not merely display the strength of his arms (Bahu). The Bahubali whom we revere rises above the strength of his arms and displays the strength of sacrifice. That is the message he gives us all. From Chandragupta Maurya downwards, a number of rajas, maharajas and emperors have ruled in this country. None of them, however, considered himself supreme. If they looked up to someone as supreme it was the emperor who gave up his empire.

Empires can be big or small, there can be likewise big or small kingdoms, there can be wars. Above all of them is renunciation and the one who gives up his empire is bigger than everyone else. He considers everything in this world as unessential for him. I have come to that Bahubali who is the very embodiment of sacrifice, one who spread the message of sacrifice in all directions. Twelve years ago, Indiraji, as Prime Minister, had the opportunity to visit this place and today, it has been my turn to get it. It is a symbol of our culture and traditions that the Prime Minister of this vast country comes all the way from Delhi to this place and bows his head to this great figure of renunciation, the

embodiment of sacrifice and offers him, his tribute of respect and devotion.

We are immersed in our daily activities, in politics and economic activities. We find that even twenty-four hours are not enough for our work. It appears as though the entire life would be spent this way, and we have no time to measure or determine what would happen to the country and what benefits would redound to the people. Because we believe in the *Bhagavad Gita* philosophy of *Karmanyevadhikaraste*—yours is but to strive. We have only the right to work and we do not either know who will reap the fruits thereof nor do we care for it. Who can guarantee who will eat the fruits of the tree, we plant today, after fifteen or twenty years when it comes to fruition. We have to go on planting trees, we have to go on serving the people. This is what we have learnt from our masters. I am not introducing politics into this but this is what we learnt from Mahatma Gandhi. I see no difference between the message of Mahatma Gandhi, Bahubali or Guru Nanak. The world holds many allurements but in the end what remains after you, is the good work you have done in your lifetime. This is the essence of the teachings of all the great men. Life blossoms because of renunciation; someone's sacrifice makes another's life blossom.

If we fail to make sacrifices, life will not be worth living. A small little seed breaks up after it is planted and a huge tree comes up. We need not fear the cycle of life and death. We should go on doing our duty and it is our decision that we would go on doing our work. It was said by one of the earlier speakers that we badly need the teachings of Bahubali today. I would say not only today but we would need the teachings for ever. As long as this world lasts and there is a desire to achieve something, there would alongside be a desire to make sacrifices. The equanimity which ensues from sacrifice and the peace of mind which follows cannot be achieved by one, who believes in enjoying the fruits of his work.

We have to pass through all these stages. We have to go on serving the people, fight elections and place before the people our point of view. We have to overcome the tremendous odds in our path.

People have gathered here in lakhs because of their religious faith but that is being distorted and we have to fight against such efforts to mislead people in the name of religion. To prevent the misuse of religion is also a religious task. We have to go back from this place with the determination that we have to defeat the attempts to distort the meaning of religion. It is not enough to recite something again and again; we have to put in some effort in the field of work. The version of religion, non-violence and sacrifice in the field of work is not as simple as a preceptor sitting in front of us and imparting lessons to us. We, of course, learn much from the religious teachers but when we are in the midst of the people, the situation is different. The sentiments are the same, the work to be done is the same but the style is different because when we are attacked we have to retaliate. When the people are sought to be misled, we have to go to them and tell them the truth.

The real power rests in the hands of the people. Political power has its own importance and none can deny it. But we have also to think what is behind political power and what is its goal. With great humility I would like to submit that political power in our country must aim at helping the poor and helpless who cannot help themselves. If this power is used in the service of the big people it cannot be said that it is serving the country. That can only lead to turmoil in the country and one does not know what would follow the turmoil. The biggest duty for those holding political power is to see that it is used in the service of those who are in no position to help themselves. Those who can help themselves would surely look after their interests. Power must bring about a balance in our society. That is our objective and we are resolved to carry out that vow. We seek the blessings of Lord Bahubali that he may give us the strength to abolish poverty and ignorance which has been existing for many reasons. There is no doubt even if we get a thousandth part of his strength, we will be able to accomplish all these tasks.

I do not wish to recount old history since everyone knows that two brothers were at loggerheads and then a non-violent war ensued at the end of which the victor was overcome with the feeling of renunciation. Emperor Ashoka also had the same feeling after winning

a big war that there is nothing after all in victory. There is nothing at the root of it and one begins to think what one had set out to achieve and what one has accomplished. Then man comes to the conclusion that what one achieves by giving up (the fruits of victory) is not there in their enjoyment. What lies in the renunciation of power is not in wielding it. But as long as one is in power, one has to use it properly. We believe that in it lies the true meaning of it and we are the servants of the people who have to follow it.

I have received much inspiration here today, which would take me along my journey. People sometimes get tired and I am no exception. But in between I happen to visit some places, which gives me so much strength as I cannot describe. I would definitely say that I get that strength and I experience it. It is like filling up your petrol tank. When it is about to become empty, you go to a petrol pump and fill it up. I also go to those sources of inspiration to get my batteries recharged so that I could go forward. Ours is a vast country, full of complexities and its problems are big too. But if you have the feeling of renunciation and serving the people in your heart, it is not a difficult country. If you are straightforward, the country is also straight. I and my Government are engaged in doing our work in a straightforward manner. I do not have to look this way or that way and there is nothing else to achieve. With this resolve and the blessings of Lord Bahubali, we intend to go forward. When we achieve something, we always say “Krishnarpanam”, or “I dedicate it to Lord Krishna”, and when we fail, we say, it is our failure because we are human.

I am grateful to you. This has given me much inspiration and courage. This is a beautiful place, an attractive complex, which is proof of the sense of beauty of our great ancestors. Near Bhadrachalam (in Andhra Pradesh) there is a small place called Parnashala. There is a belief that Rama stayed there for fourteen years during his life in the forests. The place is so scenic that if you once go there, you would not like to leave it. The ancient people had thus an eye for beauty, natural and inner beauty of things. Here too, this hill of Bahubali appears so high. The moment you see it, you realise that you have reached an ideal place, which gives you an idea of where you are and where you want

to go. I am sure, you all must be having the same indescribable feeling of having to reach there. This is a high altitude point which we aspire to reach which inspires us to strive to scale a height.

Vivekananda—the Symbol of Oneness of Humanity

I AM INDEED extremely happy and grateful to be associated with this function and to have the opportunity to unveil Swami Vivekananda's very impressive, inspiring statue at a very appropriate place in the city of Hyderabad. All these have combined to make the occasion a memorable one. I had the honour and the good fortune to go all the way to Kanyakumari and start the Centenary celebrations there. Again it was an inspiring spot and an inspiring occasion for me and I have preserved that inspiration in my mind ever since. I am sure that the variegated programmes that you are going to have during the year, will leave a lasting effect on the minds of the people particularly of the younger generation.

Swamiji is very difficult to be designed. He was a great humanist, a great saint, a great exponent of *Vedanta* and above all a great inspirer, who changed the minds of people to motivate them not only by his example but by his exhortations and the way he expounded things. You will find very few saints. Of course, we have a lot of them in this country and always this country has never been found wanting in inspiring saints, religious and spiritual leaders. But Swamiji, I dare say was little different from many others in a calibre which is all his own. What he says sounds like a good solid advice to each one of us. Swamiji does not leave you so easily. He actually captures you and

bids you to act. He commits you to action; and there is no escape if you believe in Swamiji. He has centred all his philosophy, all his interpretation of the *Vedanta*, all that he has taught and all that he has reflected upon man, on the service to man. That is something many other people have also said, but Swamiji has linked *Vedanta* with service to man, which is not so frequent to find, so you have this great Ramakrishna Mission.

One would wonder why this Ramakrishna Mission alone should do all this stupendous kind of service here and abroad, unless there is a guiding force and that force is not just a worldly force, it is a spiritual force. So Swamiji brought spiritual force to bear on the service to man. This is the greatest thing about him as I understood him. Vijayabhaskaraji just said that while we are remembering him during the Centenary, a kind of disservice is also being done to him. There is one message that comes out loud and clear from whatever Swamiji has said. It is the message of oneness and if people interpret him in any other way, they are doing a great disservice to him and disservice to the nation. There is no other way of interpreting him. He stands for oneness, oneness of caste, creed and humanity. Now how unfortunate is to see that this is distorted in the very Centenary year of Swamiji. I feel that there is something which needs to be countered while we are unveiling him on the one hand, there is someone veiling him from the other side. I feel very sad about it, sometimes angry that a saint of this greatness should be treated like this in his own Centenary year. You cannot think of a greater tragedy than this. So in this Centenary year while we have to learn many things, there are a few things we need to unlearn because something is being done to distort his message. So I think it is very necessary to study him, to explain Swamiji in the right manner, to interpret him in the right manner and I am sure, the scholars and those who are really devoted to the service to man will take this as the first step in the service to man to interpret Swamiji correctly, accurately.

I hope we will be able to do this. I hope we will succeed in doing this. This country can stand only as one and that oneness is the soul of this country. That is what, I think, Swamiji preached, practised,

exhorted and that is what we should really remember all the time. Yes, you may have read Swamiji's teachings as textbooks. It is for the Ministry to act on this. This suggestion has come to me several times and I passed it on to the Ministry. It is possible to some extent but at the same time it is not just the teaching in schools, what is contained in the text book, that moulds the world. We are all doing something to mould the world. I am not talking only of politics. Do you not find a step backwards today? I find a step backwards and feel terribly sorry about it. That the oneness that each one of us felt, the society felt is not as evident today as it was before. I think something needs to be done to stop this backward step. You have to take it forward. There is a great urge on the part of everyone in the world to look at India for something which they have not been able to find in other quarters. I am not saying anything against any country or any society. When I say that many people are looking towards India, I am telling the truth. What are we looking for? Are we looking at ourselves? Are we looking at what the people elsewhere are looking at us for? They are looking for something in us and we don't have it, then what is the point? They will stop looking at us. One might ask how does it matter whether they look at us or not. Yes, it matters because if India does not contain what others are looking for, it will be a greater tragedy for the whole of the humanity. So India is duty-bound. You cannot possibly say it does not matter.

Swamiji has shown the way. He has shown the way long ago, he has shown the way to the whole world at Chicago. And the whole world looked at us and took note of us. It should be obvious that we take note of ourselves and be worthy of what the others are looking for, in us. Cultivate that, it is not difficult. Swamiji has proved, it is not difficult, Swamiji has shown, it is not difficult, he has not just theorised, he has shown everything, just as you teach a child, the practicals in a laboratory, he has done that. What else do we want, we do not need anything except to understand what he said and did what he wanted us to do. I hope that the Centenary celebrations will create this urge, this momentum in the society, in the Government, in whole of India. To be worthy of some respect, which India has held for hundreds and thousands of years and which India has richly deserved so far, we will have to continue to deserve it in future also.

In the end I would like to thank the organisers of this function for having given me this opportunity which I think is quite valuable to me, because the more I have occasions to say something about Swamiji, the more I know about Swamiji because I do not come anyway without making some study and the more I study, I find that there is much more to study. It is inexhaustible, so let us be able to get something from him to the extent we can. The whole ocean that he is, we cannot perhaps absorb. But we can do what is the right thing for us to do as engineers of this society, as people on whom the mantle has fallen to run the country, to run the society, to create order in an otherwise chaotic situation. This great responsibility, we will be able to discharge little more efficiently, if we read him a little more carefully and decide to do what he wants us to do.

Parliament: an Embodiment of People's Will

IT IS A privilege for me to have this opportunity to meet distinguished Parliamentarians from various Commonwealth countries and also from the Union and the State Legislatures in India. I would like to join the Honourable Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri Shivraj Patil, in welcoming you to the Sixth Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar. I hope that your stay in our capital will be comfortable and fruitful. The recent rains have brought with them a cold spell, but these were very welcome rains, greeted with as much warmth as your visit to our country. I do hope you will be able to find time to see some places outside Delhi as well during your stay here.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association has established itself as one of the premier organisations in the Commonwealth for

regular consultation and exchange of experiences and information on parliamentary democracy. It has also made available a useful range of services to members to help them in strengthening parliamentary institutions in Commonwealth countries. If parliamentary democracy has acquired a normative status in our political thinking, despite our manifest cultural and historical diversities, we have to thank the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for its contribution to it.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association reflects in many respects, the essence of the Commonwealth. As an organisation rising above differences of race, religion and culture and promoting respect for the rule of law and individual rights, it represents its cosmopolitan and informal character. As a promotional forum for interpersonal contact it applies the same gentle force of persuasion to promote its objectives. The Commonwealth conjures memories of a shared past but, more significantly, it evokes a realisation of the commonalities, we have the privilege of enjoying together, particularly in our aspirations and ideals.

The parliamentary system has a long history. Since the 13th century, the Swiss had self-governing institutions in Cantons. As early as the 12th century, the Spanish had their Parliament called the 'Cortes'. The Estate General of France came into existence in the beginning of the 14th century. History also records that nearly three thousand years ago, the tribesmen of early Greece met and discussed their problems in the 'Agora'—an assembly. Even the Latins of ancient Italy met in what was called the 'Comitia' and the Teutons of Germany had their folk-moots. In India, we had a glorious tradition of self-governing institutions. More than three thousand years ago, in what is known as the Vedic Age, the king was assisted by assemblies known as the 'Sabha' and the 'Samiti'. These words we have adopted in our modern terminology also. They hark back to a very old period and bring memories of the past. The modern model of parliamentary democracy owes a great deal to the British Westminster model.

Parliament is an evolving and dynamic institution. While the value, it symbolises and fundamental principles of its working maybe of

continuing validity, its general working methods and procedures have to be adjusted and adapted to the growing pace of change in contemporary society. "Parliamentary institutions", as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once observed, "are ultimately the projections of a people's character, thinking and aims. They are strong and lasting in the measure that they are in accordance with the people's character and thinking. Otherwise, they tend to break up."

Now since Parliament is the embodiment of the will of the people, it must truly articulate the popular urges and aspirations of the people. Harmonising various conflicting aspirations and interests in pluralistic society remains one of the greatest exercises in political management. The Parliament can greatly assist in this process by evolving consensus on major issues. Through wide-ranging discussions the essence of a common policy relevant for the whole society can be distilled in the political laboratory of the Parliament. This essence is the lifeblood of a plural society and is the true measure of success of a parliamentary form of government.

Parliamentary democracy succeeds when Parliament addresses itself to the agenda of the nation. What happens in Parliament has a profound effect on the minds of the people. This may not be immediately visible, but any issue which figures prominently in Parliament, particularly for a longer period, invariably leaves a lasting impression on the political developments of the country. The business chosen for the Parliament's consideration and its sequencing and projection are, therefore, extremely important. There is bound to be some party angle imported into this process; yet it is possible to keep the party angle within certain bounds so that in the result, parliamentary proceedings serve as education to the people. This great institution inspires the nation primarily by its enlightened approach and positive orientation, hitched to overall progress. In this view, there is great need and scope for prior informal discussions amongst leaders of political parties. Such discussions help in making Parliament more effective and meaningful to the people.

I am laying some stress on this aspect, because I believe that in countries, wherein modern parliamentary democracy is just taking

root, the utility of the Parliament needs to be demonstrated and impressed on the people with greater clarity and deeper conviction. In Nehru's words, the projection of the people's character, thinking and aims assumes primary importance. From this standpoint, while there is much room for satisfaction regarding the role of our Parliaments, I am inclined to think that no country can afford to become complacent about the drawbacks and deficiencies, which its parliamentary system is likely to incur over the time. Refinements in the functioning of Parliaments will always be needed, in order to enhance the relevance, content and purpose of parliamentary institutions. We have to take care of Parliament as our only instrument, without a spare or a substitute, I am sure, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is constantly looking after this aspect.

Parliament's control over the Executive is an essential feature of parliamentary democracy. In order to further strengthen accountability of the Executive, we in India, have as many as 17 Standing Committees of the Parliament not only to make detailed examinations of Bills, Demands for Grants but also to examine the annual reports of the ministries and important long-term policy measures.

Over and above the massive development schemes being executed by the Government of India as well as the State governments, we have introduced a scheme, whereby any Member of Parliament can get development works implemented in his constituency for the benefit of the people, he represents. A Member can identify 'schemes' in his constituency upto the financial limit of rupees ten million per year and the governmental machinery would take steps to implement them in a time-bound manner. It is expected that the scheme would enable the Members of Parliament to provide some of the felt needs of the people, the large majority of whom live in rural areas, requiring safe drinking water, health-care facilities, roads, schools and other public works and while doing so, imprint the Member's own stamp on these works in the minds of the people. That is the real thing. So much work is being done by way of development but when it is specially chosen by a Member of Parliament for his area there is some linkage between him and the service which he has rendered to the people by way of that particular project.

I find that you are also discussing the relationship of the Parliament and the Press. In a democracy, the right to free speech includes a free Press for dissemination of objective news and views. Thus the Parliament and the Press supplement each other in vindicating the freedom and dignity of the individual. In India, we have a completely free Press and we welcome this. They always keep us on the alert.

I must conclude by mentioning that at its heart, Parliament is the people's forum of equity. Such a concept imposes a constructive limitation on what we finally decide in terms of legislation and policy matters. How do we resolve our conflicting loyalties? These doubts arise from time to time and cause even the most enlightened and experienced Parliamentarians some problems. But in my view they have been beautifully answered by Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our nation and one of the greatest human beings the world has ever seen. This quotation is very common in this country but I thought that since our foreign guests are here, I may as well quote. He said: "I will give you a talisman; whenever you are in doubt or when the 'self' becomes too much with you, apply the following test: recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it?"

This is the test which Gandhiji laid. I am not sure whether all of us do this test but it is there, ingrained in our minds and I can not say that we always ignore it. It does recur in our thinking and to some extent it conditions our thinking and action.

You may, perhaps, agree that there can be no better advice for policy maker.

I hope that the deliberations of the seminar will be rewarding and fruitful for all the learned delegates and that the seminar will come up with useful ideas and suggestions which will further help us to strengthen our parliamentary institutions and procedures.

With these words, I have great pleasure in inaugurating this Seminar. I wish your deliberations all success.

Religion — a Unifying Force

I AM DELIGHTED that some of the most eminent thinkers of the world have assembled here at the invitation of the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies to discuss the relationship between religion and politics within the global communities of our times. For, as we move towards the close of 20th century, we approach a new millenium in the history of human kind, and number of issues concerning our understanding of the human condition and its transformation for the better have come to the fore. They relate to the mechanism of wealth generation and its distribution in the society. They touch upon the character of social and political institutions. But most important of all, they concern those religious and philosophical world views which provide humanity with moral poise and a sense of direction, both of which are so essential to the realisation of the good life in the present and the future.

It is symbolic that this discussion is being organised today, the 46th anniversary of martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji's life was an example of how one man's faith would have an ennobling effect on the conduct of millions of men and women engaged in one of the biggest national movements of our times—the national freedom movement of India. His life is also an example of how while being true to one's own faith, one can have a positive attitude towards the followers of other religions and work in unison with them to realise a common goal. Religious faith for him was a unifying influence. It had nothing divisive about it. It is tragic that this apostle of non-violence met his end

Speech at the opening of the International Conference on Religion and Politics, organised by the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies under the aegis of Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, New Delhi, 30 January 1994

at the hand of a religious fanatic. In the manner of his death we have a demonstration of the difference between faith and fanaticism and the damage that religious fanaticism can inflict.

This International Conference has been organised under the auspices of a centre dedicated to the memory of Rajiv Gandhi. He was, as you know, a darling, imaginative and idealistic Prime Minister who combined an extraordinary capacity to a sense what was durable and noble in our traditions and relate it to the legitimate requirements of a better future of human kind. Among the prominent world's statesmen who were his contemporaries, no one combined with greater felicity, a sensitive concern for his country with an authentic internationalism reaching out to many and varied worldwide issues. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies should have taken the initiative of bringing so many men and women of intellectual eminence together to deliberate on a topic so vital to human lives in our times.

The need to examine the relation between religion and politics has assumed urgency because of certain disturbing developments in recent years. There was a stage, a few decades back, when one felt that the spread of education, technological development and growth of a scientific temper would eliminate for all time to come, the prejudices that a narrow and intolerant interpretation of religion provokes. Due to a variety of factors of which uneven economic development must surely count as one, apart from being relegated to the shadow with divisive influence of religious fanaticism, has asserted itself on the international scene by itself as also in combination with factors of ethnicity and nationalism.

Today, when a scholar proposes that the next major conflict in the world will be on religious lines—people listen to him with attention. Forty years back, such a thesis would have been dismissed out of hand.

What is quite clear is that the religion has and will continue to have a profound influence on the way people think, feel, act and react. It comes very early in life and gets stronger. This influence cannot be wished away. We have to examine this issue with an emphatic

understanding of human nature and evolve solutions that are in consonance with it. I would underline three important aspects of this.

First, the basic framework of our Constitution has the necessary clarity to specify the domain of religion in respect of politics and to take care of any translations. Some elaboration in the matter would however be desired.

Second, freedom of religion does not imply freedom to misuse religion for political ends, indeed, any non-religious ends. This needs to be specifically spelt out.

Third, our ancient civilization provides a sound base in which to build a model for regulating the interaction of religion and politics.

I would like to discuss the Indian tradition in some detail as it would help throw some light on the general issue, which this distinguished gathering can deliberate upon. In addition it would also help to demonstrate that the Constitutional, legal measures to which I have made a reference are not merely a response to a present day problem but a natural outcome of our historical and intellectual tradition.

It is not at all difficult to see that the Indian society has always been characterised by the coexistence of different religious and philosophical systems as its most striking cultural feature. Going into the specific reasons for this, one has to take note of philosophy of Indian mind, which never seemed to rest content with a single proposition however powerful, however forcefully or persuasively deposited. A fertile imagination and strong logic at once find either the antithesis of the proposition or if in agreement import into it so much elaborate variety which appeals to a large segment of intellects and finds acceptance in a number of modifications to borrow a scientific expression. These modifications multiply to soothe a host of subtleties imported into general agreement with the original proposition. Thus we have a simple proposition, proliferating into a massive system which can exist only when each of the facet coexist with the rest, making it a harmonised plurality. Thus plurality is permanent in India and so is the liberal outlook, that is necessary. There is very little chance of the Indian tradition going fanatical.

Historically, the first Indian political consolidation to place our segment in the globe slightly more than two million years ago was the Mauryan dynasty which produced Emperor Ashoka, one of the most remarkable figures known to human history. Ashoka attached great importance to the promotion of a liberal and tolerant religious ethos among his diverse subjects. His efforts to create a liberal and tolerant social climate are evident in the inscription of didactic and exotically texts on beautifully shaped monolithic columns in rocky outposts throughout his territory. The noble sentiments of the legendary Emperor as inscribed in the stone on busy crossroads, in thriving market centres and sacred places of pilgrimage and in other locations of popular congregation resonant in our ears cross two million years or more, evoke a liberal vision within a credibly contemporary ring. The 12th major rock edict of Ashoka says that the Emperor, the beloved of the gods, I quote, “honours all sects and both ascetics and laymen with gifts and various forms of recognition. The beloved of the gods does not aspire, gifts or honour to be as important as the advancement to the essential doctrine of all sects. On each occasion one should honour another man's sect, for by doing so one increases the influence of one's own sect and benefits that of the other man's. While by doing otherwise one diminishes the influence of one's own sect and harms the other man's.”

The classical tradition of religious tolerance in India was thus powerfully reiterated in the medieval centuries by men and women of noble character, the so called ‘Bhakti saints’ who subscribed to the principles of devotional theism. Such men and women composed poetry of great literary value, and spiritual power, which reached out to present our designs and others had reinforced moral fabric of our society. Again it is worth noting here that the Bhakti concept apart from its devotional flavour, was yet another harmonising process which sprang spontaneously compelling plurality of the society and needed articulation, explanation and reconciliation. The most remarkable of these was the reconciliation of the one with the many, setting at rest many questions and controversies.

The social and cultural history of India could thus be described as a magnificent all pervasive effort at harmonisation, at defining unity and diversity and making both unity in diversity, the twin, spontaneous trends in life and thought.

In the Islamic communities of India, this liberal tradition was echoed most eloquently by saints of Sufi persuasion, who articulated the seminal concept of fragrant 'Vajood' which propagated the radical view of God in penance and compassion, restored divine grace on all men and women, irrespective of their religious systems in which they were formally located. One of the most outstanding exponent of the Bhakti-devotional theism, which linked Hinduism and Islam in a deep relationship of mutual regard and understanding was the poet, Saint Kabir. Kabir represented a memorable development—spiritual and social in equal proportions—in the great heartland of north India, the region around the city of Varanasi, in the Ganga valley; in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. He was located at the very centre of a very powerful movement among the city and rural folks alike wherein Hinduism and Islam achieved a coming together.

The great tradition of religious and philosophical plurality and tolerance, to which I had drawn attention, found a powerful echo in our own times in the person of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji drew upon his immense moral stature as the inspiration of a movement of political liberation and national resurgence. At the same time, he reinforced the regard expressed by Emperor Ashoka and many others for religious systems other than one's own in the way in which he approached questions of faith and belief at the highest yet also at the simplest level. In redefining Hinduism for the 20th century, Gandhiji observed. "If I were asked to define Hindu creed," he said, "I should simply say—search after truth through non-violent means." Hinduism is a relentless pursuit of truth. Not only were the Hindus of the 20th century given so liberal a definition of their spiritual heritage by Gandhiji, but he emphasised it again in words reminiscent of the edicts of Emperor Ashoka that equality of all religions is the basis of true moral and spiritual welfare of modern man.

I have dwelt on the historical depths of religious tolerance in Indian society and its powerful code in our own time because this liberal outlook is a distinctive feature of our civilization. This is a remarkable example of a society and a polity in which there is a wide range of religious communities which coexisted over long centuries. It would be of course romantic to suggest that this coexistence between diverse religious communities has been entirely free of social violence and communal strife. However taking an overall national experience, we would unhesitatingly assert that the dominant characteristic of religious interaction within Indian society is that of tolerance and harmony.

It would be appropriate for scholars of Indian history and culture to explore how our religious and political leaders were able to create in the past, a durable liberal society within a multi-religious polity. I have often reflected upon this remarkable phenomenon. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that while life is taken as comprehensive, its various aspects have also been developed separately each with an autonomy which makes it free and unaffected by the other to a great extent. The separation of *Achaar Kand*—the chapter on conduct and ritual from the *Vyavhaar Kand*—the chapter on material is well known within the *Dharmashastra*. This could be a form of separation of religion from politics which has been achieved quite naturally and spontaneously. Neither one has questioned the other, nor interfered with the other. Both have followed the path of “*Ritta*” i.e. the right which has common relevance to both. There appears to be no time when an adversarial relationship developed between religion and the political process. We have not heard of crusades in Indian history. These features are noteworthy. There is of course reason to believe that the poised balance between religion and politics achieved by us long centuries ago finds itself on the challenge today, as never before. First the creation of a liberal political institution and adoption of a democratic set-up has tended to bring to the fore as never before, the division of people into majority and minority on the basis of religion with the distinct possibility of polarisation on the same lines on some issues with the religious folks. So far one could perhaps understand this but going a step further when this polarisation is sought to be turned

into political polarisation for party advantage, this obviously violates the basic secular structure of the Indian Constitution under which the democracy operates. The line between the two is thus abundantly clear and needs to be reinforced in whatever manner necessary.

I have spent some time in exploring the cultural history of India to illuminate the manner in which our forefathers handled the complex issues of religion and politics in the society; it is valid to point out to the powerful tradition—liberal and judicious in equal proportions, which is available to the people of India, for the exacting task of maintaining equipoise. At the same time they forge ahead in a society characterised by religious plurality on the scale simply unknown elsewhere in the world.

I am confident that during the deliberations of this Conference, which has drawn upon the individuals of such eminence from different parts of the globe, both the richness and cautious liberalism of the experience of Indian civilization will be a readily-available source of reference and guidance.

I am confident also that the understanding and prescriptions generated during the course of your deliberation will assist humanity in the difficult task of creating a world in which men and women will live with dignity and approach questions of religious belief and political commitment with the freedom essential to the flowering of the human spirit and the maturity of the enquiring mind.

Towards Accelerating the Pace of Economic Growth

I AM GRATEFUL to the Honourable Members, who have participated in this debate and given us the benefit of their observations, suggestions and also criticism.

If we look at the last three Addresses of the President, we can see the change from year to year which represents the overall situation in the country as it existed at the time he gave the particular Address.

In 1992, the President began by addressing the question of economic reforms because that was uppermost in the nation's agenda. In 1993, the focus was on the survival of India as a nation and the survival of its secular character. This year, Rashtrapati ji has spoken of a note of optimism; an optimism he has elaborated as one of accelerating our pace of economic growth strengthened by the reassuring verdict of the people in favour of reforms and against the forces of communalism.

This is a very clear picture, comparative picture, of the past three years when the President addressed us and I would say that today we have this note of optimism and we have to build on this optimism because conditions are ripe, conditions are congenial for building up on this optimism.

I would, however, touch upon a few aspects which have been raised by some Honourable Members although I must say that taking the debate as a whole what is really warranted from me is a short reply and not to elaborate because the President's Address has been extremely lucid and one does not have much to add to what he has said.

On the questions regarding the internal security, internal law and order, some points have been raised.

I would rather start with them and dispose them of, before going on to the economic issues.

The RJB issue, really, is in the Supreme Court. There have been objections raised from several quarters right from the beginning that the reference should be under one Article, not under the other. Now, all that has passed. Today, the Supreme Court is seized of the matter and the hearings are going on. I would appeal to the House, I would appeal to the Honourable Members not to, really, be agitated by this question any more, because once the Supreme Court gives its opinion, as the President has said, action would be initiated on the lines of the opinion or in the light of the opinion given by the Supreme Court. Whatever legal and other niceties could be raised, have been raised, but now we are at a stage where action can follow as quickly as possible and therefore, we should, really, be ready for the Supreme Court's opinion, expected as early as possible and look forward to taking action. On that, of course, we will again come to the House, take the opinion of the Honourable Members and have a consensus on what to do and how to take action. So, this is the stage at which we find ourselves today and I would, once again, appeal to the House to understand this and take it as the present stage from which we have to go forward.

About Kashmir there are two or three complications which need to be disentangled. The first very clear thing, we know is that from Pakistan incessantly, endlessly, without intermission, terrorism is being exported into the Valley. We have been dealing with this with utmost patience and firmness combined; where firmness is needed, firmness is being shown, but where patience could be better, we have also shown patience as was evident in the Hazaratbal matter. This has to be tackled on many fronts. The latest which, I think, we have thought of is, apart from what all is being done, there is a need to intensify the developmental effort in the State. I shall come back to the House with more details on some other occasion, but suffice it to say at this moment that the front, the developmental front has to be concentrated upon, we are doing a lot of developmental work there, but that needs to be augmented, to be given some concentrated attention. The aspect of involving the people is being looked into. The aspect of better

coordination has been looked into and I am glad to say that the coordination today is much better and much more effective than it was a few months earlier.

We have a problem with Pakistan. The problem is that they have a compulsion, an internal compulsion to harp and keep on harping on the Kashmir question and on human rights. One fails to understand how of all the countries Pakistan is the champion of human rights and India, with all our traditions, our laws, our record in the human rights sphere, is being put in the dock.

This is absolutely incomprehensible. But this is what is happening. We have to face it. We have nothing to hide. Our record is clear. Wherever there are excesses, the President has very clearly stated that we will take action. But to say that we are only violating human rights all the time is an exaggeration which borders on untruth. We would like to refute it and we would like to say that we will deal with the Kashmir question both on the front of terrorists whose human rights are not sacrosanct if they really want to kill people right and left, it has to be firmness to put down terrorism, to preserve and protect the territorial integrity of the country and nothing is going to come in the way of the Government of India, of the people of India in achieving this. Subject to this, of course, we have nothing to hide.

Lots of people are coming into Kashmir. They are giving their recommendations; they are giving their suggestions; they are giving their opinions and we will continue to welcome people to come and see Kashmir. After all, Kashmir has been one of our best tourist areas. Today, because of what Pakistan has done, the situation has worsened to such an extent that the people of Kashmir are suffering. All the income of the people of Kashmir was mostly dependent on tourism. All that is no more now. This suffering has to be put an end to and this can happen only when, what is happening by way of export of terrorism from Pakistan, ceases. We are determined to see that it ceases.

Now something is being said about what is happening in Geneva. The Human Rights Commission is seized of the matter. I would not like

to anticipate what is going to happen there. But we have convinced, we have tried to convince all our friends that Pakistan's propaganda against India on human rights is totally uncalled for. In fact, one could ask what Pakistan's *locus standi* is in respect of Kashmir, except that of an aggressor. That is the only *locus standi*. Beyond that, there is nothing. We have to tell the world many things that have been forgotten. The basic case on Kashmir has probably taken a back seat and all these peripheral issues, in fact, irrelevant issues like human right issues etc., are coming to the fore. It is time that we go into the basics, tell the world what exactly is the Kashmir question and how they have to look at it, if they have to do justice or if they have to take the right view.

This is what needs to be done now. Since we have passed a unanimous resolution rightly, validly as an act on patriotism in this House, I would like both the Houses of Parliament to go into this question in greater detail. Many of our Members could take part, they could study and the world should know—apart from the Resolution that we have passed—what the Parliament thinks about the Kashmir question in all its details. I think, this is very necessary. I find when I go out, the real basis etc., of the Kashmir question has been totally sidelined, either forgotten or deliberately sidelined. Whichever is the case, we have to bring it back into focus. It is not in the focus, at the moment.

The determination of the nation has been fully reflected in the resolution of the Parliament. I have no need to add anything to that except to say that this Government will carry out the mandate of Parliament in letter and spirit and this is the undertaking of the Government of India to the Parliament.

Coming to the demand for new States which has been gathering some momentum for some time, I would like to say that the time and the situation do not warrant the carving out of new States. We have to make arrangements within the present set up in order to see that backward areas in States are looked after better. We had the Jharkhand Bill. We were not quite satisfied with it. We asked for some

amendments to be made in it. I think it will be possible to find a solution by which that backward but very rich area gets its due in development, in investment and in the general programmes of the State. So is the case, may be, with other areas, the Uttarakhand and the other areas from where similar demands have come. I would like to respectfully submit that this is no time for us to open the Pandora's Box for new States to be created. Our ingenuity has to be extended to the fullest extent to find solutions to the problems of the backward pockets.

A MEMBER: It has not happened for the last so many years. You are just trying to postpone the problem.

PRIME MINISTER: I am making a statement because a demand has been made, speeches have been made and the point has been raised. So, I think, I must respond to this. This is what I am doing and I would say that short of carving out new States, we will have to find solutions to the imbalance that exists in almost all States and particularly States whose formation was a result of historical circumstances. We can go into all those things. Things have been done on those lines. Councils have been formed. They are working well and there is no reason why we should be diffident about doing these things effectively. That is one thing which I would like to submit to the House.

In the North-East, problems are rather complex. Shri Jaswant Singhji asked the other day, how do you reconcile the two statements where the President says that North-East is peaceful land and there is imposition of President's rule in one of the States. I think they are not only reconcilable but that is the real situation. Today, in part of Meghalaya the elections are taking place. In another State, there is a clash between two tribes. Now both are happening. But on the whole, what the President says is correct. Except Manipur where now things are fast returning to normal after the imposition of President's rule, the North-East is peaceful. But North-East bristles with problems, problems of development, problems of distance and problems of access. Even Indian Airlines suspended flights to the North-East. I do not know for what reasons. Now we have got them restored with some difficulty. The problems of the North-East are really difficult. And I

would say that we are paying special attention. I am glad that one of the States which had not been represented all these forty years has now got a Minister of State in the Council of Ministers. The other ministers also, are looking into the problems. But, I think, the North-East is an area which needs special attention with another additional complication that it has become a haven of smuggling, haven of arms transfers, which are being reflected in local feuds. So, it is not just a question of law and order. It is a social question to some extent; it is a question where large monies are concerned and it happens to be the border of three countries. Some of the areas are tri-junctions. So, it needs much greater attention and I am glad to say that we have been paying greater attention going into all those questions dealing with different aspects of the questions.

A MEMBER: What about the problem of infiltration in the North-East ?

PRIME MINISTER: That is one of the problems. What I am saying is that the border is so porous that anyone can commit a crime in India and go into the other country; commit a crime there and come back into India and so on. That is why the porosity of the border is the main cause. There was a time when some sanitised area was considered. But I am not sure that is working as it has to work. We will have to go into it and we are going into it.

Now, on the whole, the situation in the country has stabilised so as to give a lot of confidence to people from outside and within the country that economic activity can now be accelerated. There will be no problem about further investment, additional investment and things will be stable; things will be peaceful. This is the hope that has been created and that is why what the President has said is a note of optimism. This is one of the factors which has generated a note of optimism.

Coming to the economic policy, lots of things have been said. In fact, there have been many suggestions; many demands of a local nature. I would, with your permission, with the permission of the

House, like to deal with them in writing; send individual replies to all the Members who have said something about their constituencies, States etc. because we do not have to devote the time of the House for these individual matters. But I am only giving a few important policy statements, policy issues to the House.

What is the picture that is emerging in the country? On the one side, we are having the massive induction of outlays, investment in the infrastructure sector. This is happening. This is well known. The sectors that are being given additional investment are fuel, oil-refineries, power, food-processing, chemicals, electrical equipment, electronics, metallurgical industries, transportation, hotels and tourism, industrial and agricultural machinery.

These are the priority areas. Never before in any other previous plans did we have a shot in the arm to these areas of development as we are having today. I am not saying that it is enough, Much more needs to be done because once you start on this road, there is really no end. You will have to go on doing more and more.

On the other side, I am glad to say that on the rural sector, on the rural development sector—this is what I would request Honourable Members to appreciate—from the Seventh Plan outlay of Rs. 7000 crore, we have jumped to Rs. 30,000 crore in the Eighth Plan. This again has never happened in the past. So, there is a determination on the part of the Government to balance this out. We cannot wait until industries come and the benefits trickle down to the villages. They will never trickle down to the villages. Industries mostly will remain where they are. Rural industrialisation of that kind is going to take a long time. Of course, the small-scale industries are doing very well in the new set up. We have enabled them to become more efficient. But that is not enough. So, Rs. 30,000 crore are being spent.

A MEMBER: What is its impact on rural poverty?

PRIME MINISTER: That also is being looked into. The impact on rural poverty, the impact on rural unemployment has been studied by

independent groups. I can come to the House with details. But right now, I would say that so much money being injected into the rural economy cannot go waste. There are benefits accruing, they have accrued. There is no point in denying that. Of course, there may be some wastage here and there. But rural areas have benefited. For instance, more than two lakh artisans in the rural areas have been given improved tools. Now what is the impact of that? The artisans are not, by and large, going to the towns in search of employment. This is not my statement; this is the statement of an independent body which has gone into it. I can produce all the details. But I am just saying that when you are injecting investment for development into the rural areas, it is wrong to say that the rural areas do not respond. That would be an insult to our people. They are taking the benefit, they are responding to the benefit. I do not know if the particular experience of Members in those areas is not good. We will go into that, if again there are such individual cases. But generally the benefit is going to the people directly.

A MEMBER: Only recently, Shri Rameshwar Thakur said that the Government of Andhra Pradesh is not utilising the funds to the maximum extent.

PRIME MINISTER: I am only speaking of the general trend of investment in the rural areas. In the next plan, the picture that emerges is like this. We have had some discussion with the Planning Commission. The rural areas would have to get at least three times more than what they got in the Eighth Plan. So, in the Ninth Plan, for rural development Rs. 90,000 crore have to be given and nothing less. I am not saying that even that is going to be enough. But it has to be so.

Six per cent of the GDP on education has been committed. What does that mean? You are at 3.7 per cent today. In the Ninth Plan, it has to be somewhere between 3.7 and 5 per cent.

By the end of the century this has been a national commitment and we have to go, at least, to five per cent of the GDP in the Ninth Plan. And in the Tenth Plan, we go straight on to the six per cent target. So, the way we are projecting development plans, particularly in the rural

areas, it is so clear that we will reach our targets and there will be no problem about the rural areas suffering in any way. And once this is inducted in a big way, you will have the rural areas booming with activity, busy with activity—economic activity and other activities. Education will improve and then you will have a picture which is totally different from what we have today. So, this is the economic picture that is emerging and is bound to emerge on the lines which I have just suggested. This is the general theme.

About investment from outside the Government, the word ‘foreign’ somehow seems to evoke certain pictures, certain concepts. what I would say is, outside the Government whatever investment is coming, whether from within the country or from outside the country, from NRIs, that is increasing quite steadily and we expect that we would get more investment from outside than we had anticipated and that would be in substitution of what the Government would have otherwise had to invest.

On the power sector, the Planning Commission finally said, they cannot go beyond 30,000 MWs. The requirement was more than 48,000 MWs. Where is the rest going to come from? You do not have resources; you cannot wait another five years. We are trying our very best to get this investment from outside the Government.

A MEMBER: Is it by paying double the cost?

PRIME MINISTER: What we are paying, we will come to that. Every problem, every project, you can discuss here. The question is, can you wait another five or ten years for 18,000 MWs? Is it possible? If you are thinking of industrialisation, can you do without power? Coming to terms and conditions, you can always have terms and conditions laid before Parliament, on the Table of the House. I am prepared for that.

So, at the end of some months of hard bargaining we are now able to say that it is not 30,000, it is going to be about 36,000 MWs which we will have in this as of today. We are still negotiating with many more

investors and it is possible that the 18,000 MW gap which had been left unbridged by the Planning Commission in sheer helplessness may be completed. This is what is being done in all the fields where our own resources are inadequate and we cannot wait for another five years or indefinitely to get resources and do these things in the next plans. This is how this substitution process, of which I have been talking time and again, is taking place. I have given only one concrete example in the power sector.

Now it has been said, of course I can never expect this slogan to be stopped because it is a slogan coming in handy, that we are doing things at the instance of somebody else. I have not got any suggestion from any international agency, financial agency, asking me to put Rs. 30,000 crore in the rural sector or whatever I have been doing. Whatever the Government has been doing is totally ours. We have taken the exigencies of the country, the needs of the country into account and we have planned this, we have put this as the project. It is for Members to suggest amendments. Maybe, we can improve many things if only a constructive attitude is taken by Members. Let us discuss where the thing is wrong. Just do not say you are doing it because somebody else has asked you to do it. That is not correct. Factually it is wrong and then as an argument, it has absolutely no base. How does it matter what I am doing, at whose instance I am doing? I am doing this. It is on the Table. Please say whether it is good or bad.

About the Uruguay Round, particularly the Dunkel proposals, it has become a horse, which is almost dead. But everyone is flogging it still. We discussed it last time, we are going to discuss it again; there is no problem. I would like to say, pending discussion, that I have gone into every aspect of the Dunkel proposals, particularly on the agricultural side. On the agricultural side all kinds of things are being said, all kinds of cock and bull stories are coming. I would like to reiterate on this occasion that on the agricultural side we have nothing to lose. We are having much to gain, opportunities will come our way. The export of agricultural commodities from India will get a shot in the arm.

Rashtrapatiji has made a special reference to three schemes which were announced in 1993 and which started on the 2nd of

October, 1993. I am very glad that even after the President's Address was given to us, there has been improvement in all these three schemes. For instance, the President's Address says that under the employment scheme, 2,000 people have been given loans so far. Between the day the Address was made and today, the latest position is that in all, 6,000 people have got it. The banks are proving to be a little difficult because they have their difficulties. We are looking into all those difficulties and solving them. And there will be some kind of exponential growth in these particular programmes once the bank problems are looked into.

About the programme exclusively meant for women, I am glad to say that about five lakh of women in this country have already opened their accounts. From them, deposits worth Rs. 6-7 crore have been collected already. This is catching on. In Jammu and Kashmir—everybody says, no development is taking place—the latest report is that within the last few days after it was introduced there, more than 1,000 women have entered this scheme.

So, by and by, the entire womenfolk are getting into the scheme and I am glad that at the end of one year, they will be earning 25 per cent interest in what they have put in the deposit and that will be a good thing for the women of India because we are engaged in a programme of empowering women.

About Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections schemes, the banks and financial corporations, the President has given full details and these corporations have been able to help the people concerned to a large extent. So, I do not have to really add anything as the figures are there. For instance, the Backward Class Finance Corporation has assisted 80,768 people so far. The authorised share capital, as the Honourable Members know, is Rs. 200 crore. So, this programme is going ahead steadily. Now, in the next five years, we would move towards abolishing child labour in industries like carpet as also other hazardous industries. I am only giving the important decisions and suggestions.

Now, about the educational plan, I have already submitted. At the same time, there is a proposal that we should levy education cess.

This is nothing new. We had District Boards functioning in the old British days and in those days, education cess was being levied in municipalities and in District Boards in many States. I cannot say of the whole of India, but in the States which I know, this was being done. Somehow this was given up. The expectation was that everything should come from the exchequer. Now, the suggestion is, all educationists have agreed and Chief Ministers have agreed to levy this in their States and we will start it. In fact, we wanted, perhaps, the President himself to mention this but we were not ready. So, I think we are getting all the details now. If educational cess is properly levied, to that extent, the educational outlays will also get some augmentation and that is what I would like to inform the House.

Lastly, a few things about external affairs, some comments have been made about the US and our relations with the US. I would like to say that our relations with the US in the economic, cultural and other fields have been close, good and progressing well. Certain statements emanating from Washington have created certain misgivings and that is why, the President, in his Address, has made a very pregnant and meaningful statement, "We look forward to working with the United States towards mutual understanding including on those issues on which such understanding needs enhancement." I think nothing more needs to be said on this because the President agrees that there are areas in which understanding is lacking. Regarding understanding, who has not understood whom, is a question. That itself is a question. This will reflect the vibrant, democratic and secular ideals of our two countries.

I think this contains the essence of what we stand for. The Home Minister has already informed the House about our position and I think there is no need to add anything.

On the question of India and China boundary, about further progress on the Peace and Tranquillity Agreement, I would like to report to the House that the discussion on that are going on and they are at an advanced stage. The idea is that in some areas where we are having an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation, as a beginning, we want to

see that that confrontation is removed to the extent necessary. Now, we are at that stage. Maybe, in a very short time, we will be able to make a breakthrough on that.

These are the important developments since the President's Address. The President has already included the rest in his Address and I do not have to repeat these things.

One point about our fishermen being fired upon has been raised by certain Honourable Members. I share their concern. We have taken this up strongly with the Sri Lankan Government with a view to formulating effective measures to prevent such incidents of Sri Lankan firing on our fishermen. A team of our officers has gone to Sri Lanka to look into concrete steps in this regard. I would like to inform the House that this is the latest position.

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I AM GRATEFUL to the Honourable Members who have participated in this debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President and who have given us the benefit of their observations, suggestions and criticisms. The tone of the President's Address, focuses the foremost concerns of the Government and the nation. In 1992, the President began his speech by addressing the question of economic reforms. That was at the top of the agenda at that time. Considering the urgency, considering the economic situation prevailing then, it was but natural for the President to be fully concerned about that and to mention that as the first thing in the Address. In 1993, the focus was upon the survival of India as a nation and the survival of its secular character. We were too close to the Ayodhya incident and after that the riots;

The country got itself totally detached from the first programme of development. We were under great stress and it was

again but natural for the President to start the Address with a clear reference to that state of affairs. This year, Rashtrapatiji has spoken of the mood of optimism; an optimism he has elaborated as one of accelerating the pace of economic growth, strengthened by a reassuring verdict of the people in favour of reforms and against the forces of communalism. Now this is the context which is relevant today. We have achieved quite a few things during the last two or three years and we are on the point of making a real dent on the main problem of poverty. Reforms have enabled us to reach a stage where we can look with a certain amount of optimism at the future. We can see the graph of industrialisation and the graph of investment going up steadily and, therefore, the President was good enough to say that we are looking at the future with optimism.

The important aspects touched upon by the President start with the law and order situation, the situation of the Ayodhya issue and then goes on to the economic aspects of the reforms programme. As we know, the reference before the Supreme Court is being heard now.

Many Honourable Members have spoken about Kashmir and pointed out the areas of concern. I think the question of Kashmir has more or less dominated the debate and it is rightly so because this is a matter of concern. One does not understand why different things are being mixed, the question of human rights and the question of the status of Kashmir. Now, these are sought to be confused by Pakistan. Pakistan has no *locus standi* in Kashmir. But Pakistan seems to be making use of the human rights issue or the human rights angle to butt into the whole thing and create a case—I don't know what kind of case it is—a *locus standi* for itself. I don't see any other explanation about what is happening in Kashmir. Human rights issues are general to all the countries. There are certain situations in which human rights issues are raised. We respect human rights as much as any other country, any other government and any other people. But how does it lie in the mouth of Pakistan to raise this issue and, that too, in Kashmir where Pakistan has no *locus standi* except as an aggressor? This beats everybody's thought.

There is obviously some obfuscation going on, some confusion being created because the question has become a little old in the sense that the basic realities, the basic facts about Kashmir have been sidelined and other matters have taken the centre-stage. It is time that we, in Parliament, discuss the matter, debate the matter, right from the beginning, right from the day on which the tribals were sent into Kashmir to browbeat the king and to create a particular situation and they were stopped just at the nick of the moment. Some of us remember that moment, some of us had read about it, some of us could imagine very vividly what was happening on that particular day. But the younger generation had lost this particular focus and it is time that we educate the people of India by way of a debate in Parliament or by other means. This is absolutely necessary because the people are thinking that Kashmir is a matter of dispute between India and Pakistan. It is not a matter of dispute between India and Pakistan. By no stretch of imagination or by no distortion of facts could it be seen as a dispute between India and Pakistan. I think it is time that we do that. I would very much like a detailed debate on this.

The measures that have been taken in Kashmir in recent weeks have been, perhaps, detailed by the Home Minister, whose statement the other day was quite clear. And many Members of Parliament told me that it was a timely statement. So, I would not like to add anything to that. All I can say is that there has been an improvement in the coordination of our actions. We are proceeding to a point where the involvement of the people of Kashmir in the matters of administration will become possible. We have been thinking of several alternatives in that respect. I have discussed with Leaders of the Opposition and got their views. I think, we will find a useful way of involving the people until such time as the Constitutional and legal, democratic set-up is installed there. But before that—I have said it several times; some friends have said, ‘Why are you talking about this all the time?’ I am not talking about this alone all the time—what I am saying is, before we are able to do that, the terrorist activities should be put down, and the conditions should be created for installing that set-up in Kashmir.

We have largely succeeded, but we have not completely succeeded. This has to be admitted because there is a never-ending stream of terrorists being sent from Pakistan—trained, armed, and funded. When this happens, it is not really easy to have a process of democracy instituted in the State. So, it will take some time. But as I have said time and again—and we all believe in this, we all subscribe to this—not an inch of the Indian soil should be without democracy.

We are committed to democracy everywhere in India; and Kashmir is no exception. If it does not have that set-up today, it must have it and we are determined to have it.

Coming to the demands for creation of new States in the country, I will not go into the rights and wrongs of it. I can only say that we have to find solutions for imbalances within a State, within the context of the State, and not start breaking up once again because that will be an endless process. I think Government is not in favour of carving out new States now. The question of Jharkhand, for example, we are thinking of a Council. Legislation has been passed by the State Legislature. We have pointed out that certain things need to be amended and it is at that stage. There has been some hesitation. But that hesitation is only a matter of time before it is removed. Wherever such arrangements are necessary, the arrangements have to be made in the context of, in the framework of, States, whole States; keeping them as whole.

The same thing goes for other demands in other States. I would appeal again to Honourable Members and the people in the various States not to come up with these demands because it will embroil the country into something from which we cannot come out. We know what happened at the time of the States reorganisation. We know how many years it took. Finally, so many problems are thrown up in this kind of thing; disintegration, breaking up of States, etc. Some cases are even now pending, after thirty or forty years. It is not a good thing to get ourselves diverted into other channels. It is good to have whatever arrangement is

feasible, within the context of the States, and implement that scheme.

Now, with some reluctance, we had agreed to the constitution of Development Boards, in Maharashtra. You can argue on both sides. But since it is a Constitutional provision, since it has been provided in the Constitution itself, to carry out the Constitutional provision, whatever be the pros, whatever be the cons, ultimately, we have to fall in line. That is how these Boards came into being. We have still to see how they work when they are constituted. But to start now another process of carving out new States would not be in the interest of the country.

Therefore, this is how we would like to tackle all the problems of imbalance, problems of backward pockets in States, problems of ethnic and other minorities asking for their special cultural and other rights to be protected. All these things can be done by certain devices, which are available to us in the Constitution itself and we should not really resort to carving out new States.

The North-East, has been, on the whole, peaceful, with the exception of Manipur, where we had to impose President's Rule. The conflict between two tribes is a very unfortunate thing. The whole of the North-East consists of many tribes. If this inter-tribal conflict becomes the order of the day, then the whole area would be plunged into conflict. I think, we should see to it, The Government will see to it, that this is controlled at the earliest. This has been done in Manipur and wherever this occurs, it will have to be done. We just cannot afford this kind of conflict anywhere.

Now I would like to say a few words on the economic policy. As I said, the President has clearly expressed optimism on the economic reforms undertaken two years ago and the way the reforms have worked. We agree with what all he has said and we think that the optimistic prospect of the future is already visible. I have had interaction with other governments and the business circles, investors and a whole lot of people who are active in the

economic field. On a personal note I should say that I have not met so many businessmen at any time in my life before, but we have to deal with them and I have found that they are quite impressed by what India has to offer. They are not impressed just for the sake of formality. The difference between the attitude of these people, these investors two years ago and their attitude today is so clear to me that I am really expecting them to be as good as their words. Some of them have come. They have started taking preliminary steps for investment.

All this is going on and during the last one year there has been a perceptible increase in this activity. On one single day we cleared as many as seven huge mega power projects, which is quite an encouraging thing because power is, really, wanted in this country—badly wanted. The farmers are complaining that they do not get electricity even for a couple of hours during the whole day. This is not really the way of either industrialising the country or improving agriculture. So, the first necessity in the economic field is the generation of power, more power. Now this is becoming possible at last. In addition to what the Planning Commission has decided to have within our own means in the Eighth Five Year Plan, we are now, for the first time, going to have extra power. I am glad to say that because this has not happened before. We were falling short of the targets set by the Planning Commission itself. In the Eighth Five Year Plan it is said that the country needed 48,000 MWs, but they said that they could not go beyond 30,000 MWs taking into account the available resources. Now, is it really desirable, is it wise on our part to say, “okay, go ahead with only 30,000 MWs?” Even for the Eighth Plan you are falling short by 18,000 MWs. What will happen in the Ninth Plan? And if this 18,000 MWs spill over the Ninth Plan, what happens to the regular things that are going to come in the Ninth Plan? This means, on the whole you will be perpetually falling short of power for the next 20 years, 30 years, 50 years.

This is not on. In a country which really wants to industrialise in a big way, this is not on. Therefore, the most important necessity

today, the programme today, is the programme of power generation. I am glad to say that after the clearances of these seven projects—and some more in the offing, which I know about, but I do not want to describe just now—the position is going to improve. It is not easy to do this because there are lots of divided responsibilities in the generation of power. The State Electricity Boards are there. Everything goes into their hands, and everything depends on how they deal with what goes into their hands. The investors may come. We may give clearances, but beyond giving clearances we have nothing else to do. There is no role of the Central Government. We are a federal polity, and, therefore, power is squarely in the State List, and the State Electricity Boards will have to manage it. And we all know how the State Electricity Boards are managing it. They may be having their own genuine problems, but the result is that the management leaves much to be desired.

This being the case, we have to tie up a lot of things. They are asking for counter-guarantees from the Centre. Can the Central Government give a counter-guarantee? Is it possible for the Central Government to give a counter-guarantee for all the generation of power in the States which means that your budget will not be enough? Is it possible? Is it feasible? Then we have to find a way. So, it is quite a complicated matter. We are looking into it. I am hopeful that with some amount of dissatisfaction from the Finance Minister, with some amount of dissatisfaction from the Planning Commission and with some amount of dissatisfaction from the Power Minister, which I will have to keep at the minimum, something has to be really fashioned out so that power generation projects become possible in the country. At the moment as the matter stands, it is extremely difficult, but we will make it possible, and I would like to assure the House that on power generation we will not be found too deficient. Of course, there will be a gestation period of two or three years, but, then, after that we will be more or less able to generate power as it becomes necessary and to the extent it becomes necessary. In this case of generation and use, generation will not be lagging behind. This is what we will have to ensure because this is a continuous programme which may go on for the next 10 years, 20 years, we do not know.

On the rural development side, I have some very good news for the House. It is not realised generally what a real revolution is coming in the rural areas as a result of this programme. From the Seventh Plan to the Eighth Plan there has been a jump of four times, from Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 30,000 crore. We have made a calculation. The Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, convinced me that it is possible for us to fulfil the target of Rs. 30,000 crore in the Eighth Plan because, by the third year of the Plan, we have crossed the half-way mark, we are at about Rs. 15,000 crore and odd, and in the next two years we have to allocate only about Rs. 300 crore or Rs. 400 crore or Rs. 500 crore more than what we have allocated this year, in 1994-95, which is not at all difficult. If we do that for the next two years, Rs. 30,000 crore will be fulfilled, and it will be a historic step. Within five years, within one Plan, we would have been able to pump in Rs. 30,000 crore for rural development.

Now, I am coming to the Ninth Plan which is not far off. Maybe, they will have to start the exercise in the next few months. What do you allocate in the Ninth Plan? I would say, it cannot be less than three times of Rs. 30,000 crore.

A MEMBER: How much of it will leak?

PRIME MINISTER: If there is something there, it will leak. If there is nothing there, nothing will leak. So, let us have something and start stopping the leak. Just because you are afraid that there will be a leak, if you have nothing, then you get nothing. So, that is not the right approach.

A MEMBER: The Point is how much we do, to monitor the implementation and to stop leakage.

PRIME MINISTER: We can go into these matters, but the point is that I am talking of allocations. I am talking of the picture the Indian countryside is going to present. With Rs. 30,000 crore in one Plan and another Rs. 90,000 or 80,000 or 70,000 crore or whatever, coming in the next five years which has never been

dreamt of in the history of Planning in this country. Rs. 70,000 or Rs. 80,000 crore were only in the power sector, in the irrigation sector, in sectors other than rural development. Now, this is the big change that is in the offing. Why? Because we will be able to find money from other sources for these mega projects. This is the substitution that is taking place and this is something welcome in this country, because this lopsided development of India, the infrastructure on the one side and the towns, the villages remaining behind, would create endless tension in the country in the coming years unless we are able to plug this. This is how the balancing is being done. I find that the prospect for the Ninth Plan and the subsequent Plans is extremely good.

Now, we have also taken a decision about 6 per cent of GDP for education. It has been my experience that the best thing for a Government today is to commit itself first. Once you commit, the things will happen. Before commitment, if you really start examining and re-examining, you will never be able to come to the point where you make a commitment. That is what happens. It happens in the case of rural development and it happens in the case of education. The announcement was made in that Conference of nine countries with the largest illiteracy, the largest population. We had this Conference during last November or December. In that Conference, after some consultations I said we would be able to reach 6 per cent by the end of the century. We are now at 3.7. I do not know whether it is only the Central sector or Centre and States combined, but even if it is 3.7, it should be possible to reach about 4.75 or 5 per cent in the Ninth Plan. When you go to the Tenth Plan, there will be a jump up to 6 per cent. This again is going to be a revolution, because much of the benefits of this will go into the countryside. So, we have a picture emerging, where rural India is going to be totally different from what it is today. Of course, we have to be wise in how to allocate these resources, how to spend these resources. That is a different matter. That is a question of mechanics. But the allocations and the picture that emerges, are quite hopeful.

We are also on the point of deciding after consultations with the Chief Ministers that we would have an education cess. This is nothing new. We used to have education cess in British India, during the days of the District Boards, during the days of the old municipalities. All that has been abolished. In the interregnum a philosophy developed that everything should come from the State Exchequer and no one need pay anything. Well, that also had its day. Today we have to go back to this stage where we have to get all the resources from wherever they are available and in the matter of education, we have to make a special effort. So, all these decisions put together give us some hope for the future, for the next century. This is what we are really preparing for, to enter the next century. With a large band of educated workers and technicians etc., we will be in the front rank of developing countries, which have got maximum development already achieved.

The picture—as regards the investment from outside the Government sources, which is otherwise called foreign investment—is quite hopeful although we need much more of it. As I said, the demands being what they are, the needs being what they are, we would need to have much more investment coming into the country within the next two or three years, within the next five years. But whatever has come, has come the way, we wanted it. The break up is something like this. Fuel, oil and refineries—the investment is 17.6 per cent, power 16.1 per cent, food processing 11.3 per cent, chemicals 7 per cent, electrical equipment and electronics 9.7 per cent, metallurgical industries 10 per cent, transportation 4 per cent, hotels and tourism 3.5 per cent, industrial and agricultural machinery 2.4 per cent. So the charge, that is levelled against the Government that most of these industries are only for face powders and cosmetics, that is, consumer industries is not true. I mean this is the percentage. This is the break up. Not more than 7 per cent goes into the consumer field.

There has been a lot of criticism about inflation. Since the debate on the Budget is coming up, I am sure that the Finance Minister would be able to take care of that. But I share the concern



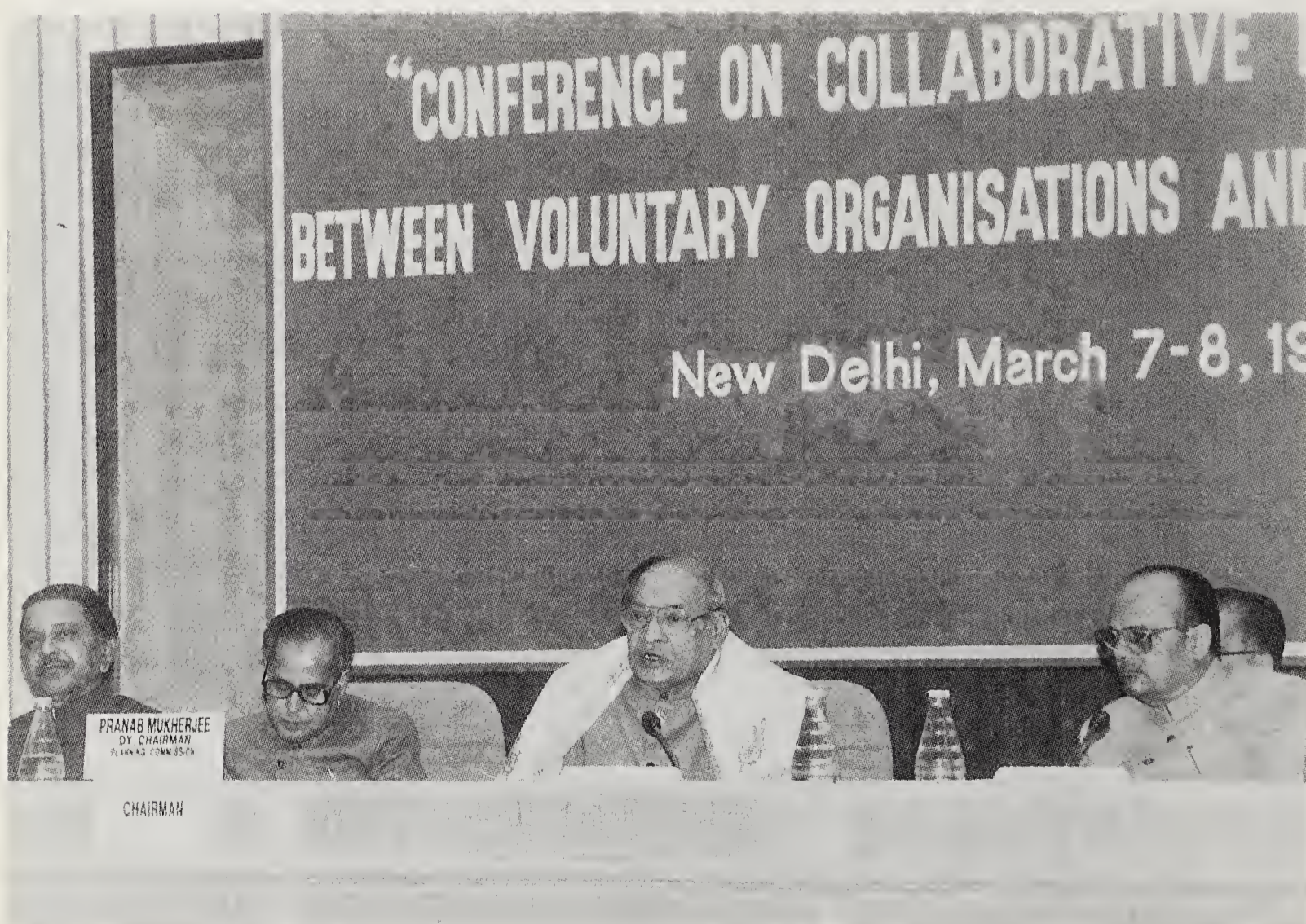
With President, Dr Shanker Dayal Sharma and the Chief Guest, Mr Goh Chok Tong, Prime Minister of Singapore at the Republic Day Parade Ceremony, New Delhi, 26 January 1994



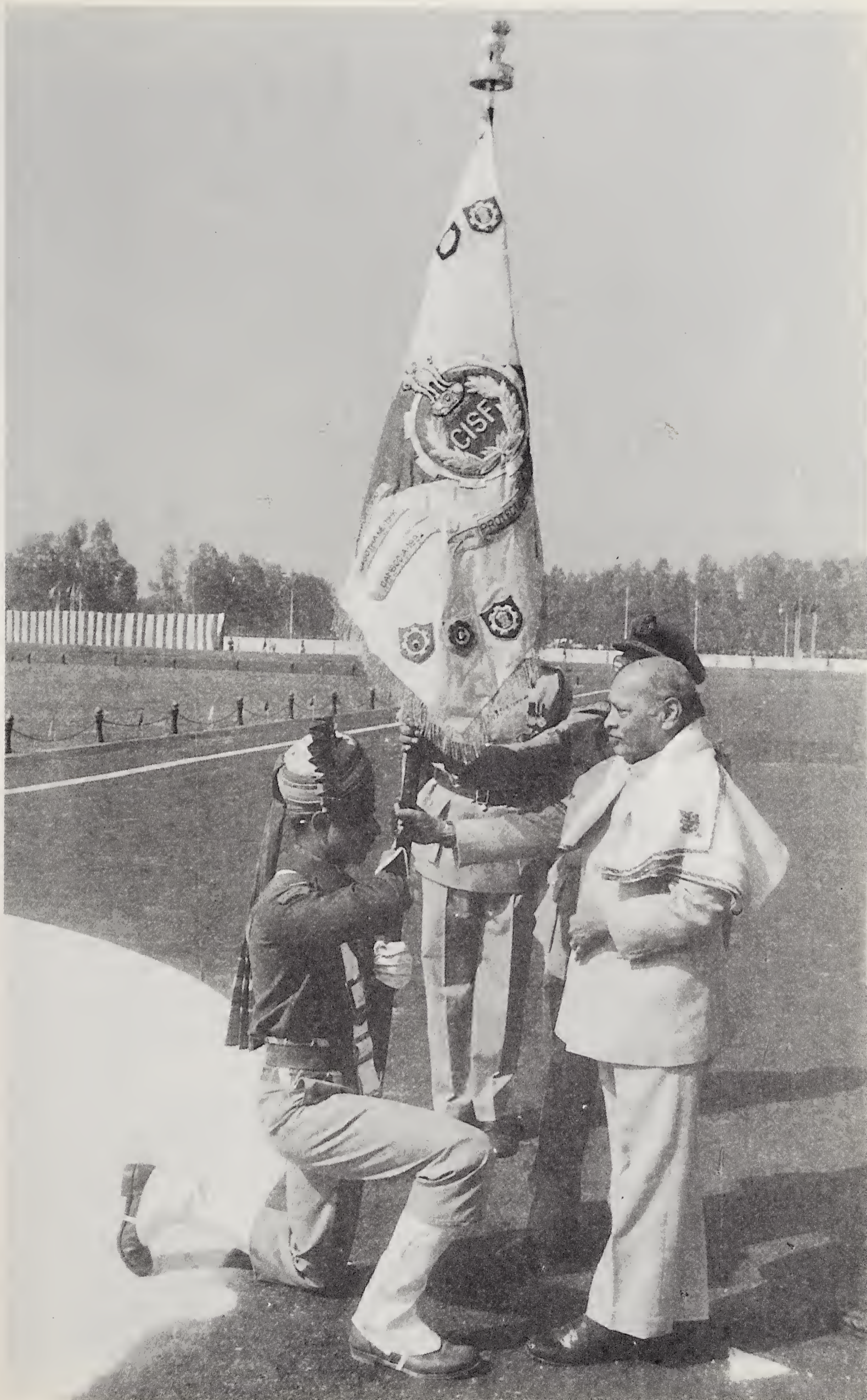
With the Award winners—best NCC cadets, New Delhi, 27 January 1994



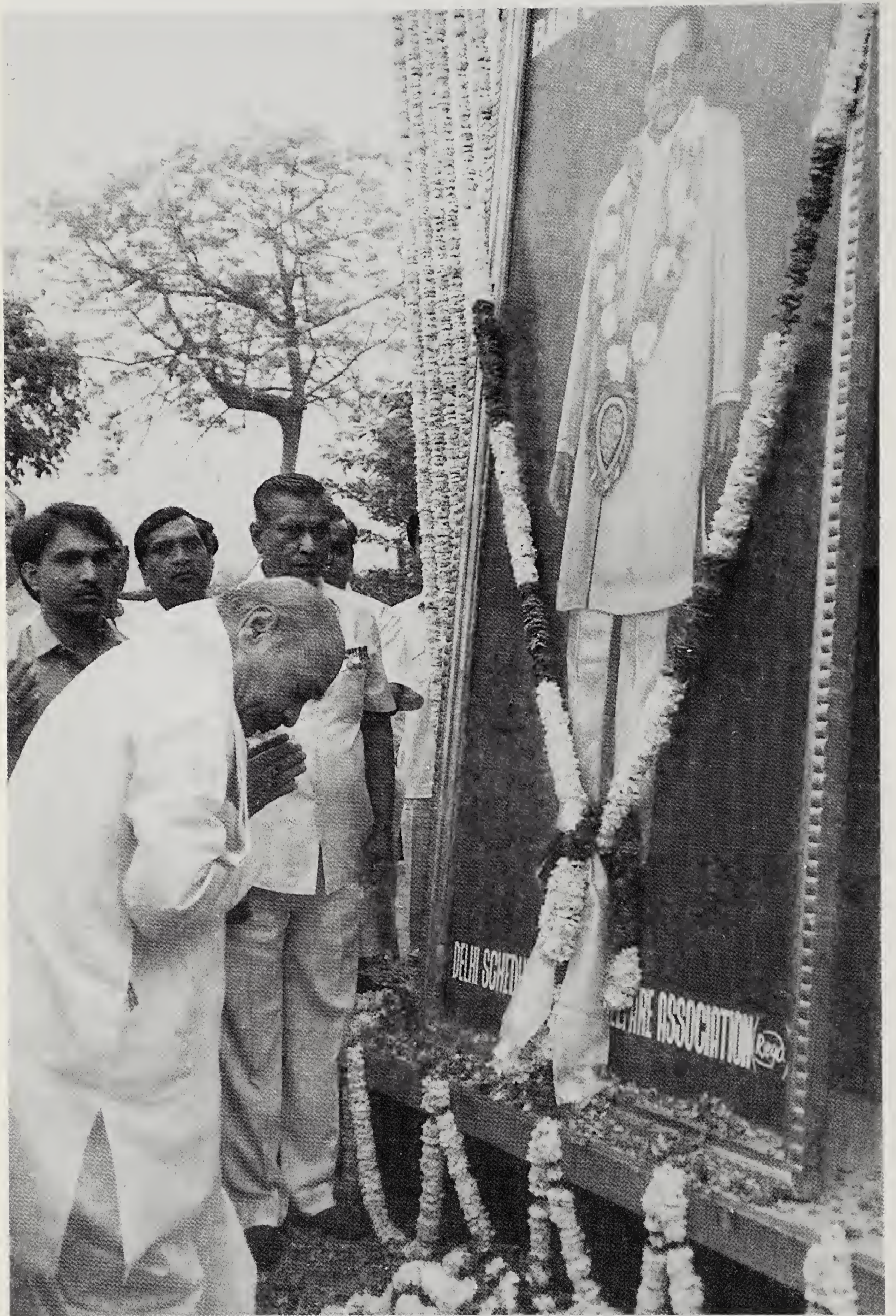
Presenting a Memento and Citation to Shri Kapil Dev for his achievements in Cricket, New Delhi, 21 February 1994



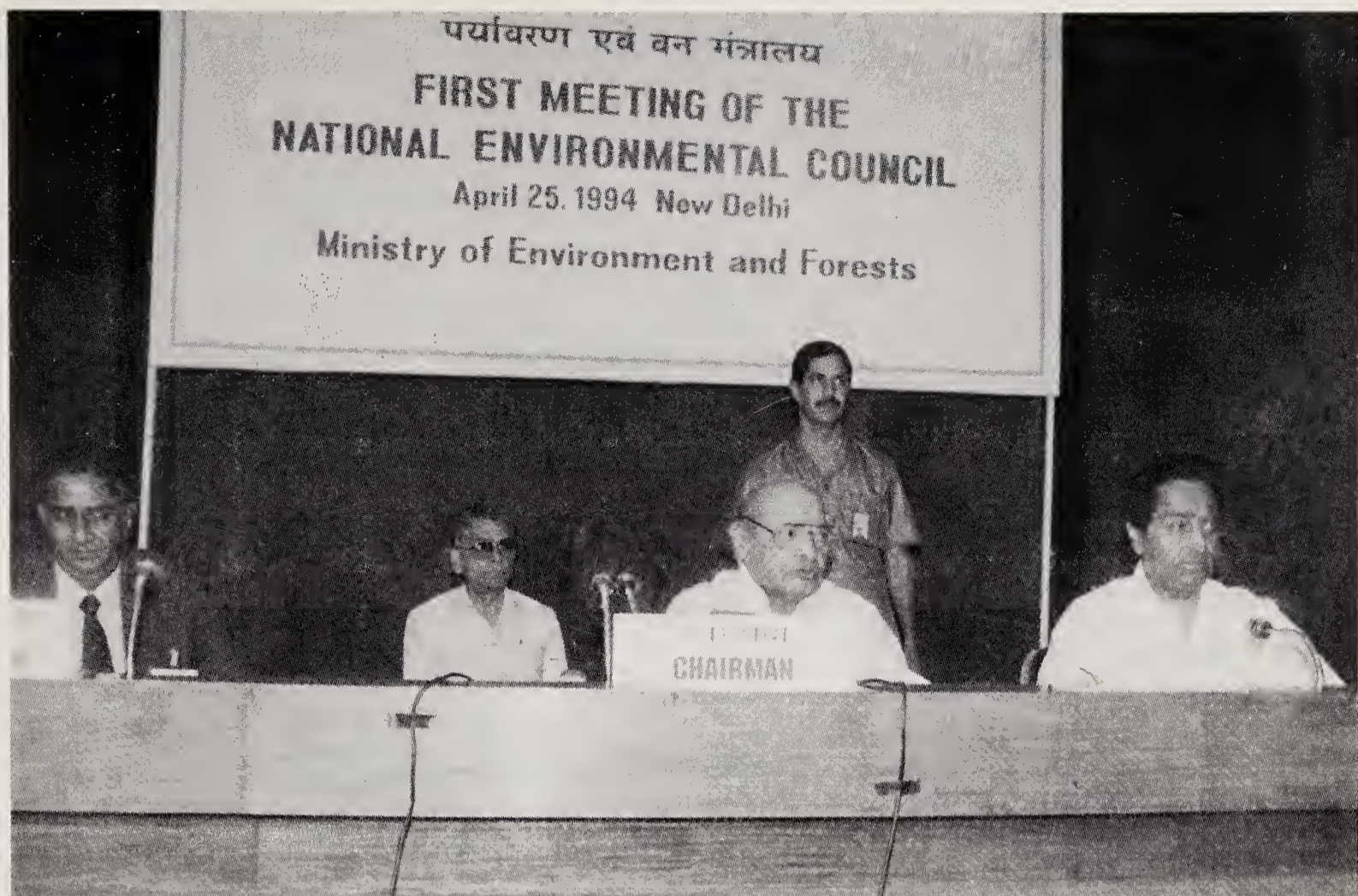
Inaugurating the conference of Leading Voluntary Organisations, New Delhi, 7 March 1994



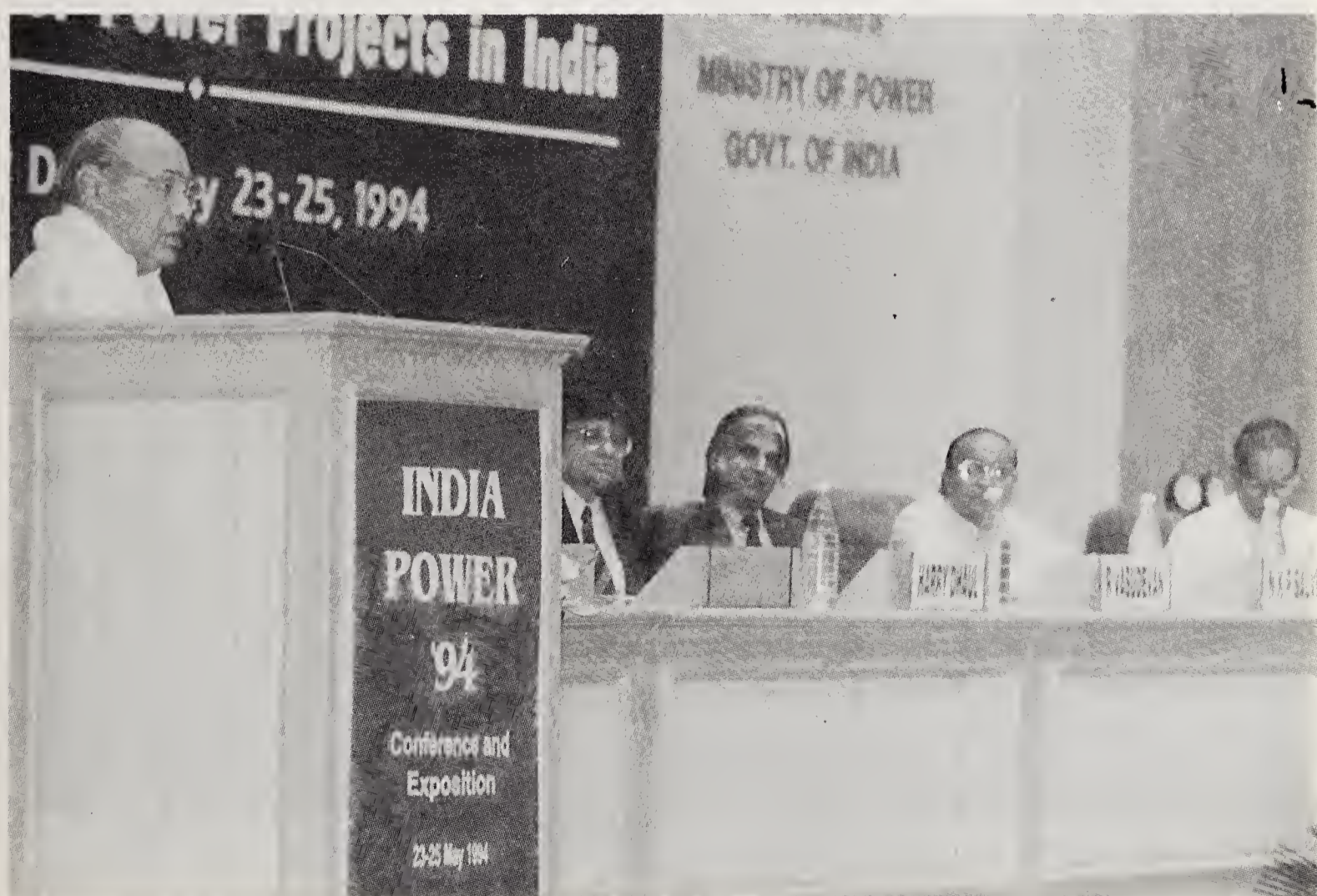
*Presenting Colours to the Central Industrial Security Force
(CISF), Ghaziabad (U.P.), 10 March 1994*



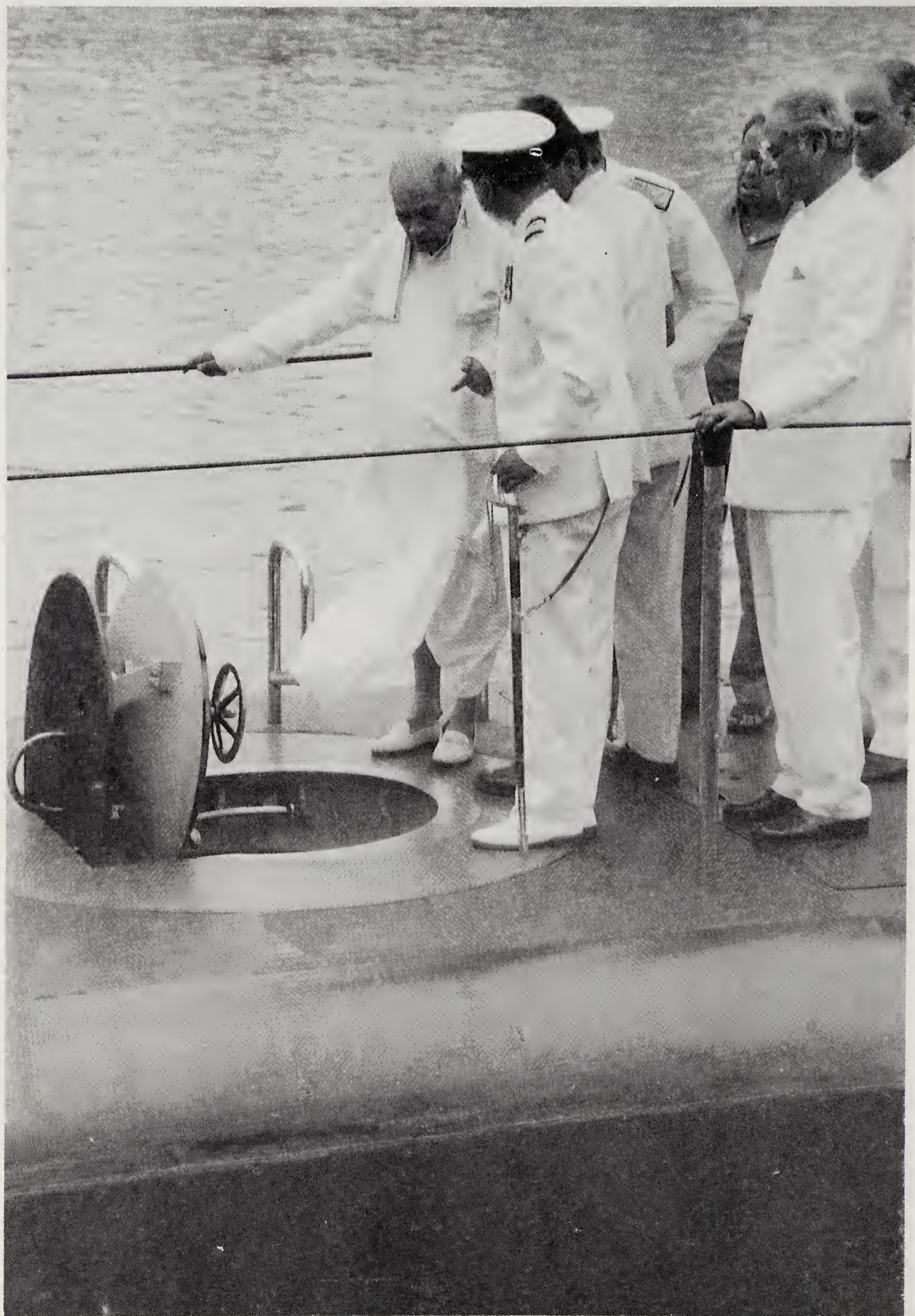
Paying homage to Babasaheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar on the occasion of his birth anniversary, New Delhi, 14 April 1994



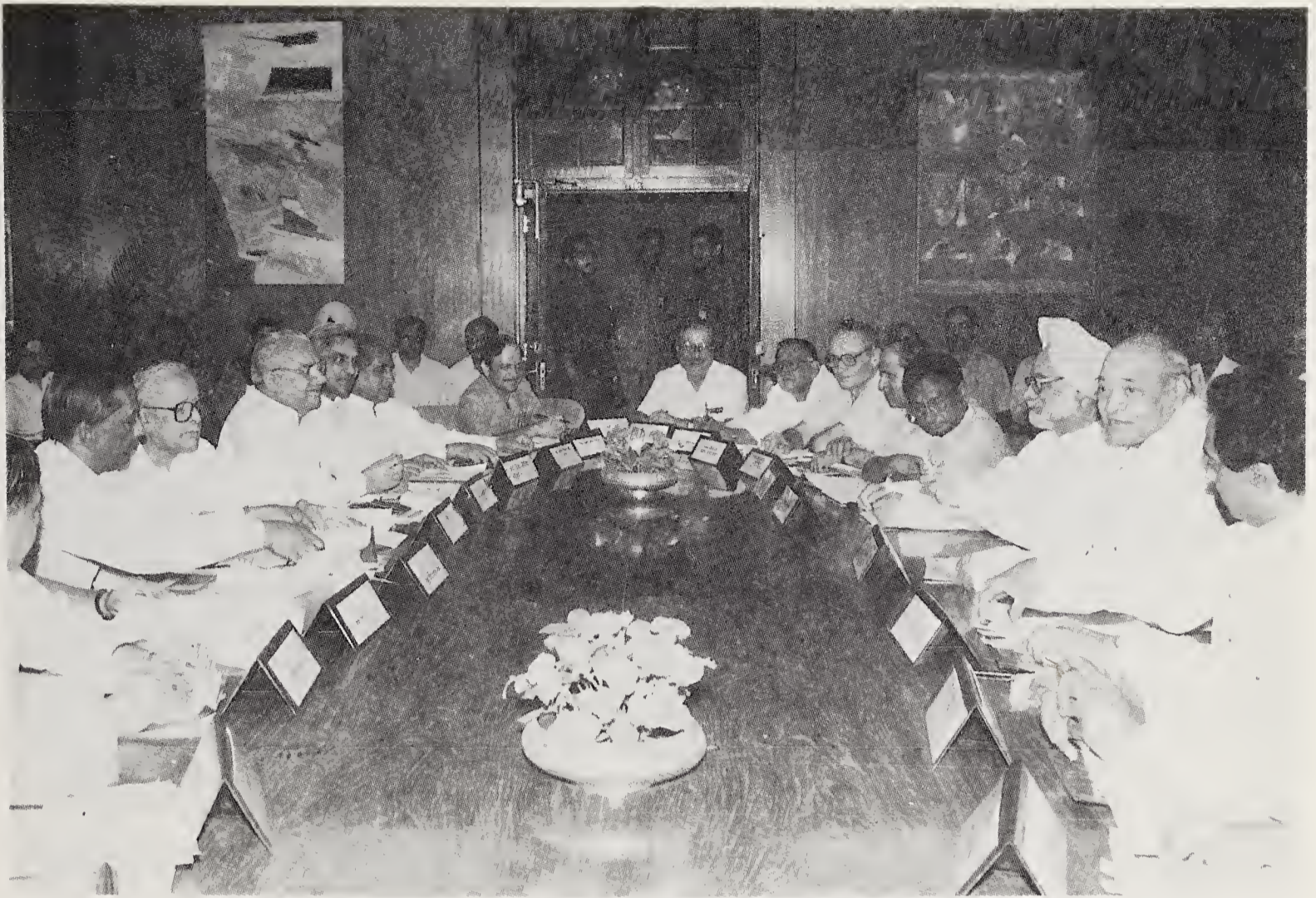
*Addressing the first meeting of National Environmental Council,
New Delhi, 25 April 1994*



*Inaugurating the conference on the Development and
Financing of Private Sector Power Projects in India,
New Delhi, 23 May 1994*



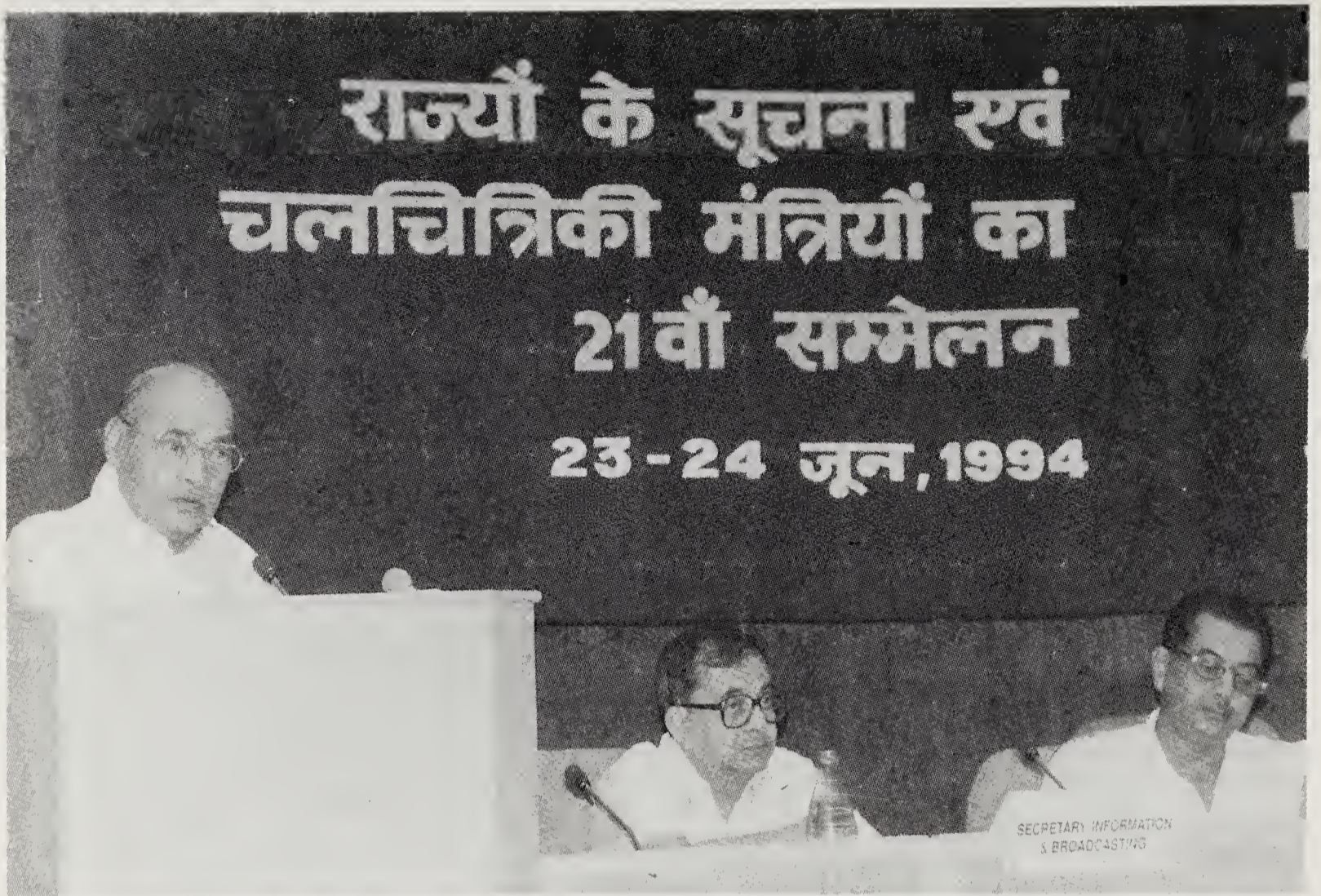
*Commissioning the indigenously built Naval Submarine,
INS-Shankul, Bombay, 28 May 1994*



*Presiding over the meeting of the Central Ganga Authority,
New Delhi, 3 June 1994*



*Presenting a Memento and Citation to Vijaypat Singhania on
his winning, Round the World Air Race, New Delhi,
8 June 1994*



Inaugurating the 21st conference of State Ministers of Information and Cinematography, New Delhi, 24 June 1994



Addressing the 24th meeting of the Kendriya Hindi Samiti, New Delhi, 25 June 1994

of the House, I share the concern of the common man, I share the concern of all the thinking individuals in this country that we cannot live with this kind of inflation, 8.4 per cent, 8.5 per cent. We came down to less than 6 per cent. Now, how is it that we are at 8.4 per cent or 8.7 per cent? Mostly it has been said that because we raised the issue price of wheat, rice, etc., this has come up. From the point of view of timing also, it is true. But we cannot afford not to raise it. This is something, which we have to understand. If you have to pay well, pay a remunerative price to the farmer, we have at some point of time to get this from the consumer. They will have to pay more. How much more is the question. On that there could be a difference of opinion. Should we jack it up to this extent or a little less or a little more? These are matters of judgement. These are matters of assessment. After taking into account all the relevant factors, we have waited, and, at the end of several months, we have had to do this. Now, it is not to say that I am absolving myself of the responsibility; I am not. The responsibility of the Government will continue to be to see that this rise in prices is somehow absorbed in the economy so that it will not present itself in the shape of inflation and create distress for the poor people in this country. This has to be done. Since we have not imposed any taxes, since we have left a huge gap of Rs. 6,000 crore unfilled, it means that we have exhibited a certain amount of optimism and faith in the strength of the economy and the recovering power of the economy. This is how it has happened. It was not difficult to put taxes to the extent of Rs. 3,000 crore or Rs. 4,000 crore out of Rs. 6,000 crore. It was very easy. Many of us were tempted to do it. Well, not too many knew about it, fortunately. But there was a temptation. But ultimately, when we really wanted to test the economy crucially, on a crucial point, we said, "Let us do it. After all, everything can be reversed." But we hope we would not have to reverse it. This is how it has happened. Now we have to see that not only the price-rise is absorbed but inflation is also brought down. How this is going to be done is a matter about which, I am sure, the Finance Minister will take Honourable Members into confidence when we discuss the Budget.

Now, the other important matter which has been referred to time and again—although there is not much life left in it—is the Dunkel Proposals. It is quite interesting that this has been discussed earlier. Nothing new has happened. It is going to be discussed once again and I am sure it will be discussed everywhere in the country, because it seems to have become a kind of issue. Where there is no issue, something is sought to be created. I would like to say categorically that this is not an issue any more. The Dunkel Proposals will not cause any harm either to the farmer or to the other people in the country. We are convinced about it. We will certainly discuss this in the coming week, perhaps.

A MEMBER: Sir, you kindly explain to us. Some of us have not been able to understand that. Bland announcements do not take us anywhere. You kindly explain to us. (Interruptions).

PRIME MINISTER: I have made this statement several times. In Parliament also, I have expressed this very clear conviction that the agriculturist, the farmer, is not going to lose anything. In fact, he is going to gain new opportunities for agricultural production. It is okay.

The President's Address clearly stated the increase in the subsidy under the IRDP, which is now Rs. 4,000/- in normal areas; Rs. 5,000/- in drought-prone and desert areas and Rs. 6000/- for the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe household and physically handicapped. This is a good increase, and I am sure, this will be welcomed by one and all. The JRY allocations also have been increased and, today, in 1994-95, they stand at Rs. 3,855 crore, which is again a hefty sum. One very important programme which we had taken up about two years back was the supply of improved tool kits to the artisans in the villages. I am glad to report that the latest figure of the outreach of this programme is about 2,30,000 artisans in 166 districts. An independent survey of the result of this supply of kits has been made by an independent body and they have very clearly stated that as a result of the availability of this improved tool kit with the artisan, he is able to earn more and he

has, in many cases, given up the idea of going to a town in search of livelihood. This has happened very quietly, without any fuss and fanfare and this is a kind of programme that needs to be undertaken and relentlessly followed in the rural areas because the urbanisation which is taking place today, is really causing problems and whatever needs to be done, including the Rs. 90,000 crore I was talking about, to be pumped into the villages—this should really prevent the people from going out of the villages into the towns just for ordinary work. I mean, it is not intellectual work in which education is needed or great skills are needed. That, of course, will always happen. But just for the sake of making both ends meet, if the village people leave their hearths and homes and start living in slums in towns, in big cities like Bombay etc., then this country will have a very great difficulty even in the urban areas, in managing its urban areas. We know that wherever there is a big hospital like in Delhi, a lot of people come to that hospital from rural areas. If you take the statistics of patients in any big hospital in Delhi, at least 40 per cent of the patients come from rural areas from 100 miles, 200 miles or 300 miles, because there is a big hospital here. That is why in Delhi, I remember, there was a plan of having satellite hospitals, seven or eight of them in Delhi itself. I am sure that programme is going on. This is the kind of decentralisation of very sophisticated facilities to be made. I am glad that in the basic medical facilities, this is being done. Some very good hospitals are coming up in the rural areas. In the next five to ten years, if this multiplies, then the pressure on urban hospitals will certainly reduce and in addition, if livelihood is available, if the source of income is available in the rural areas, that is the only thing we can do to create conditions of balance and also stop urbanisation which is taking place in a ruinous way at the moment and if we do not stop it, then it will get out of hand.

The Government had introduced three schemes on the 2nd of October, 1993, one exclusively for women, one exclusively for the rural areas and one for the urban youth—not very educated but moderately educated youth—who are in a very large number.

I am glad to say that all the three programmes have now picked up and they are now going on as the President has informed the Parliament. There is a Special Cell looking into this in the Prime Minister's Office and they are actively pursuing these programmes.

The allocation which was Rs. 600 crore in 1993-94 has been doubled in 1994-95 and now it is Rs. 1,200 crore for the programme of Employment Assurance Scheme in the RPDS blocks. There are 1,572 blocks where for a hundred days in a year, which is supposed to be the lean season, during that season, work will be made available to those who are prepared to work.

On the programme of Mahila Samridhi Yojana, I am glad to say that, including Jammu and Kashmir, the women have responded very well indeed. Now the present figure is about 5 lakh accounts opened and more than Rs. 6 crore deposited. This would not have been even imaginable in normal times that the women from small villages would come forward and deposit this amount. Of course, they have to do much more; Rs. 6 crore is a very small sum; maybe, it should be 600 or 1,200, whatever.

But then, by and by, we will be able to reach a stage where the women of this country whose empowerment is one of the duties of the Government, cast on the Government, will be able to think of saving for themselves and keeping the money under their own control, under their own dispensation, and this is the first step in the process of empowerment. The main purpose is to create self-confidence in the women of the country. Now this programme also has been progressing very well.

I may also inform the House that the Backward Classes Financial Corporation has done a very good job. Authorised share capital, as the Honourable Members know, is Rs. 200 crore. It has been set up and it has assisted, so far, 80,768 persons, that is, it has taken off and the people are taking advantage of it. In the coming months and years, I think, it will be able to help even a much larger number of persons.

A MEMBER: (In Hindi) I want to ask you about the National Minority Finance and Development Corporation. You have declared and promised about it. Would you throw some light on it ?

PRIME MINISTER: The National Minorities Finance and Development Corporation is going to be set up shortly. I may tell you why it has taken even this time.

(In Hindi) You know that Constitutionally we cannot set up any thing separately from the view point of the minorities. Our Constitution does not permit us. Consequently, we had to devise one or the other way for it and we, in fact, succeeded in devising the way. I understand that the minority will derive maximum benefit after the setting up of this Corporation. This much assurance I can instil in you but its credibility and structure ... (Interruptions) This is why that there has been some delay in it. I believe that it would materialise.

The new Wakf Act is before Parliament. I am not aware as to when it is going to be passed but it is the property of the House.

One very important decision that has been taken is that in the next five years, we would move towards abolishing child labour in industries like carpets and also other hazardous industries. Now, in fact, this has been one of the very important points of action. But, as Members know, the Indian Constitution has not banned child labour in those terms. Some of the hazardous industries, at the moment, are employing child labour which, I think, is against the spirit of the Constitution. That needs to be stopped. Now this is being gone into in great detail and I do hope that it will be possible for us to take these boys and girls out of these hazardous industries and put them to school. All these will depend on the general economic condition because we cannot ban anything under the Constitution, but, at the same time, we have to create conditions where this is not taken advantage of.

A MEMBER: I would like to submit one thing. Mr Prime Minister, while I have sympathy for what you are doing, kindly keep

in mind the type of propaganda that is being made against us as a nation. Secondly, it is not only hazardous industries that matter but the exploitation of children almost as a bonded labour in the various industries has to be looked into in detail.

PRIME MINISTER: Well, I take that. I have just placed before the House the position as it is. We have to make a special effort in this direction. Yes, we are getting a bad name as a result of this on the score of human rights. We will have to attempt to do all these things at the earliest and we will do it with the consultation of the people who are interested and with the consultation of the Members who would like to give their opinions. There is no party matter in this. We can all come together to make this possible.

I come to one or two matters on external affairs. First is India-China relations. Honourable Members know as to how much progress has been made in improving these relations on all fronts. And the latest in these is the implementation of the Agreement of Maintaining Peace and Tranquillity on the Boundary. This Agreement was signed when I visited China last year and action is being initiated on this. The first preference and the first priority is to see to it that in areas where there is a total eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation, this confrontation is lessened. It is not easy because certain things have happened and you just cannot measure by a tape and say, "You go here and I will go there." It is not that simple. It has taken some time. This is the priority action that needs to be taken. I see the contours of the Agreement on this also and I would like to share my optimism with the House that in this we will have a breakthrough. That is the latest on the Agreement and the Joint Working Group meetings are also taking place. But on that, of course, I will report or the External Affairs Minister will report in the debate in the Houses. But this is the latest and I would like the House to know about it.

There have been some comments about the statements coming from the United States. I have just said that the way one has to respond to these things has to be rather calibrated because

you have to read many things in those statements and behind those statements. When explanations come the next day, one has to take both together. In any case, we are not in the habit of kneejerk reactions. We would avoid those things. What the President has said, in his Address is very meaningful and I would like the Honourable Members to see how, in a very dignified manner, he has put the problem. He says: "We look forward to working with the United States towards mutual understanding including those issues on which such understanding needs enhancement." Now this is a very, very balanced and realistic statement. It says that understanding is needed on certain matters. It says that understanding is lacking in certain matters. It is for us to take his command and see what we can do to bring about this understanding. That is all I can say. In any case, my Home Minister has made a statement. Another point which has been made is about the Indian fishermen, who have been fired upon by the Sri Lankan Navy and the Members are rightly very agitated about it. I would like to tell them that I share their concern and we have taken up this matter strongly with the Sri Lankan Government with a view to formulating effective measures to prevent such incidents of Sri Lankan firing on our fishermen. We have sent a team of officials who are right now in Sri Lanka. They have gone to solve these matters and I hope these things will not recur.

A MEMBER: The issue of Kachchhathivu Islands may also be taken up along with the Tamil Nadu fishermen.

PRIME MINISTER: This is an issue which is the outcome of an agreement. Now we have to go into it and if there is anything which is disadvantageous to us, we will have to examine it in greater detail. It is not possible to give an abstract reply on this.

Madam, these are the main issues which are cast upon. So far as the other local issues are concerned, as I said, we will be sending replies to the Honourable Members.

India's Resilience to Come Out of Storms

I AM GRATEFUL to all the Indian organisations in the United Kingdom who have joined the Indian High Commission in giving me this warm welcome and an opportunity to share some thoughts with you.

India has come a long way since 1947. When Mr John Major came to India as our Chief Guest last year for the Republic Day, I thought there was some special appropriateness about it. India was telling Britain, see what we have become after you left us. That was the message. We parted as friends and we stayed as friends and we will stay even closer. That is another message which Indian culture, the Indian way of life, stands for. I am very happy that he was able to come and I am also happy that I am able to return the visit, which has gone off exceedingly well so far and I have no doubt that it will be one of my most successful visits abroad as Prime Minister.

Forty eight years, is hardly a long time in the history of a nation. But, of course, long enough to know to which way the nation is going. That is possible for historians to assess whether it is going up or down whether it is going to pieces or is it holding. India within these 48 years has shown that it has the capacity to hold, the capacity to grow, the resilience to face the most turbulent storms and still steady itself within the shortest possible time. You know what we have gone through from time to time. Free India, independent India has not had a smooth sailing on the whole. But we are steady. We are steadfast. Our progress has been hampered by many events, many forces, within and outside, but ultimately the resultant motion forward has been quite remarkable and that is what gives hope not only to India but perhaps India may still have a message for those who have the perspicacity to accept it, to take it. We stand for peace. We stand for peace everywhere in the world

and in our definition, peace is not just the absence of war. There is a condition when you are neither at war nor have any peace. That is not the kind of peace. We call peace as something different that is, peace comes only when there is harmony. According to all philosophies this harmony is there inherently in creation. Every particle—*zarra-zarra*—is related in some way to every other particle—call it an atom; or *Anu* and still this relationship is what sustains the harmony and that is the harmony which human-kind would have to imbibe and create within itself because it is there in nature. What man is asked to do is what God has given in nature already as an example. To what extent he will take the lesson, take the message, on that depends his progress eventually. So, it is not just the absence of war, it is something much deeper, much more profound than that we aim at.

We are a long way from achieving it; yes, that is agreed. But then that does not dim our idealism, our vision and our resolve to proceed towards that vision, in that direction.

We began our tryst with destiny, as Panditji described it, with many significant assets and some inherited disadvantages. Looking back, we can take satisfaction at many achievements of the Indian people, sometimes overcoming serious odds. And, I am not disregarding many of our frailties and failures. We have passed through them. I am one of those who knew them from close quarters, who knew the anatomy of the failures as much as the anatomy of the successes. So, I take a balanced view and, on balance I say, the future for India is bright but the way for India will never be smooth. You will be having bumps, bumps galore, and I am sure that you will get over the bumps and get on to the task.

Our democracy remains not only intact, but a vibrant and proven force in our day to day existence. Our resilience to overcome all kinds of disasters, as I said, natural and man-made, has surprised the world and sometimes surprised ourselves. We remain committed to secularism while fully respecting all religions. That is the only thing that makes sense in a pluralistic society. No one can go out of India, no one can be thrown out of India, no one

can throw any one out of India. And, even common sense demands that if you cannot throw each other out, learn to live together. And, if there are forces which make people forget even this, even this ordinary common sense, it is time that we as rational human beings make up our minds not to allow these forces to raise their heads. There has to be some way of keeping them at a distance, showing them their place and telling them, look this is not going to work, this is not on, so let all of us get on with the task that is important for the nation. That is what we are trying to do.

Over the last two or three years, we have had very difficult situations where the minds of the people were completely diverted from what ought to be their concerns, diverted to matters which neither of them could help, could solve. People knew only how to create a problem, they did not know how to solve it. Thousands and thousands of people got swayed by the problem, knowing fully well that none of them was in a position, even remotely to do anything about solving that. And, that is totally against common sense. There is no philosophy involved in it, it is just what you cannot do, you know you cannot do and still you are breaking your head against the rock. What is this sense?

I am glad to say that there are clear signs of the recovery of that robust common sense, which is our heritage. People are returning to the path of development, of sanity, of harmony and I am sure, they will not be swayed to the extent they have been swayed by these extraneous factors. I am hoping that the programmes that we have undertaken for the youth of the country, for the villagers, for the lower middle class people, for the poor people, all these programmes when they come into full swing—and they are coming into full swing—will keep the nation steadfastly on the course of development, which we have chosen and I cannot see any future for India or any other developing country if the focus on development is in any way disturbed. Everyday you lose in extraneous things is a loss of development to that extent. That is how this single-minded determination for development, has to be the first concern of all right-thinking people in India. That has been our endeavour.

Even so, with one Australia being added in population every year and the kind of growth that you have in the rate of increase in population, taking the aggregate, taking the numbers, absolutely mind-boggling numbers, if there is disturbance also on top of this, how is any country going to stand at all?

So, this is our endeavour. We want your blessings for this. As the High Commissioner said, yes, the mother always wishes well to the children wherever they are and you as people from our own flesh and blood who are flourishing, who are prospering abroad, to make us happy; and your endorsement of what is happening in the country of your origin, your understanding of what is happening, why it is happening is a great asset to us because this spreads; you are our Ambassadors, you are our High Commissioners, whatever, because every friendship you make is a friendship made for India and we have as many friends in the aggregate as you can make. That is our asset too. We want this to be understood by all.

As I said, we have a plural society. You cannot expect any society, plural or homogeneous, to be totally inactive. There will be some activity. And when there is activity there will be ambitions.. When there are ambitions there will be a clash of ambitions. And, when there is a clash you know what can happen unless we are able to channelise the clash, we are able to resolve the clash in time. Sometimes we are able to resolve the clash in time. Sometimes we are able to do that, sometimes we are a little late and by the time we reach the spot and start doing something, the damage is done to some extent. Either one can prevent the damage or repair it. Either of the two one has to do. But you cannot allow the damage to go on and on for ever. So, this is the approach of the Indian society and I think the Government today represents this approach. As I said you are not always proved right. You think what you are doing is right. This is human life; everybody's experience turns out to be the other way, not necessarily wrong, but there are circumstances, extraneous circumstances, unexpected circumstances, which do not yield the result you have been expecting. So what do you do? There are people who will call you wrong. You have to put up with

that. But at the same time you must know how to bring it back. There must be a remedy and that remedy is what you have to search at the earliest. So, this is the life of an individual, life of a nation, life of a government, there will be ups and downs, and we have to find our way through all these hurdles. We are aware of the tremendous distance we still have to cover in order to guarantee minimum social justice to our people. Our people means—900 million people.

We don't have complex problems in India fortunately. I want to tell our foreign friends, British friends. Our problems are very simple—food, clothing, housing, health and education—but the aggregate is so forbidding. If you have to raise the salary of every teacher by five rupees a month, you calculate how much it will come to. It is just five rupees for the teacher but for the Government it goes into an astronomical figure. So, it is the magnitude of the problem that is baffling, not its complexity. We don't have psychosomatic ailments in India, thank God. We want more of the same—more schools, more classrooms, more teachers. We have not come to the stage where every case becomes a case for study. No, there is only one case and that is for the millions and millions of Indians, we have only one remedy, if that remedy is available to all of them, the entire pyramid goes up. We do not want to differentiate within the pyramid between the top and the middle and the bottom. We don't want to leave the bottom where it is and raise the top alone. That way lies disaster for India. This is the approach. If we have millions and millions of jobs being created in whatever manner, they may not be permanent jobs, they may not be government jobs, in the sense of say wages, employment of wages, if a programme is taken up; now, this is just to see that the bottom is not neglected while the top is being raised. So, we have a double programme, the programme of opening up at the top, let all the top industrialists of the world come and try their hand in India, no problem at all. At the same time some one has to take care of the bottom and it is the Government alone that can take care of the bottom. No multinational is going to run my primary schools for me. I am absolutely convinced. No great industrialist is going to

come and look after the primary health centres of India, I am sure about that. That is for the Government to do. And that is the duty, which I do not want to neglect. In a way, I am being relieved, I am getting a relief that the larger investments are coming from outside. If they had not come, I would have to cough up the money even for them. So, there is a good division between them and me. I look after the base, let them look after the top rungs and the industrial development and the infrastructure and so on. So, this is the pattern that we have accepted. I am sure, it is going to work because no one is hurt by this. All the misgivings that the economists and the learned people had about this have been dispelled by the programme which has been undertaken to look after the entire pyramid. So, to the extent we succeed, the misgivings will be dissipated, they will go away and this is what we are trying to do.

I just wanted our friends here to know what we are doing and in short why we are doing it. I am sure that this will be appreciated because it is based on good sense, it is based on what all has been given to us by experts in their own jargon but when we convert it into common sense this is what it amounts to.

Strengthen Grassroots Democracy

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to meet you. On two of three occasions earlier, plans had been made for me to visit this place. I had great desire to visit the Islands. As Home Minister and Defence Minister I have been here before. Every child in India knows of the importance of the Islands and its place of honour in our freedom struggle. I too took some part in that struggle and we derived great

inspiration from this place. Of course, I had not seen this place then but the Andamans were well known wherever we worked. We bowed to the Islands from that distance for what had happened here and the river of sacrifice that flowed here.

I am here now as Prime Minister, as the first servant of the people. I am, indeed, happy and wish that your Islands make rapid strides and be the equal of other provinces of India and never lag behind. The Andamans have to make progress and never experience any deficiency. It is your right and our duty to help you move along the path of progress. I know your requirements are somewhat different and there are many difficulties. Everything has to come from quite a distance and whatever is done here costs more and takes more time. But we are determined to bring you alongside other parts of the country irrespective of the extra expense involved and we are succeeding in that task. Even in the mainland, the cost is always higher in the mountainous areas. If you want to build a house there or make roads, what are called 'ghat roads' there, the zigzag roads, it costs more. Here, we will bear the extra expenditure because of your geographical position and your location, you and we together.

India is such a vast country and it has all kinds of provinces, some backward, some developed. The desert areas have their difficulties, with lack of water, while you have water all around you. In the desert areas they have only sand all around them. We have metropolitan cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi, and we have some very backward regions too whose service is our duty and we are applying ourselves to that task. Hardly another country like this you would find anywhere. Many of those who come from abroad are simply charmed by the brotherly feeling and the inner peace which they find in our country. The strength which the people have for living together among themselves is not something new. It has been inherited by us from time immemorial. This is part of our culture and civilization and it permeates our thinking and understanding. It is part of our blood.

This is a peace loving nation, a society based on peace. We have to preserve the peculiarities and specialities of our country. It is our duty to ensure that while we make efforts to provide the people with material wants, for their comfort and progress, we should also not let this inner strength of our people, of this country and society, be dissipated. We should not allow that inner strength to be weakened. We have to strengthen the fellow feeling among the people and their capacity to live together with peace. There are forces, external and internal, which seek to dissipate the nation and break it up in parts. There is a conspiracy to achieve that end. This again is not a new development. Our history shows that for thousands of years this has been happening. But the strength of inner peace and our ability to live at peace with one another always gets the better of the dividing and destructive forces. They are able to keep the destructive forces in check and suppress them. In between, some harm was done, there was some bloodshed, there was violence but in the end the country could control the situation and did not come to grief. Sometimes the country has suffered economically also. I can say confidently today that the bad days are behind us. Now we foresee good days and they are coming. India is on the path of progress and will continue to keep going ahead.

We need your blessings and your cooperation. You should know what is being done. We have democracy in our country and for its success the biggest and the most essential requirement is that people should understand what is implied by good days, know the difficulties faced and the government should know the people's mind and the people must know what the government is doing. Since the government represents the people they have to understand one another. We are trying to establish that kind of democracy in our country. You are going to have Panchayats. The late Rajivji had realised and we have realised that it would not do to form governments only in Delhi or in Bombay at the State level. The democracy must extend to the villages and people should understand how a government is run, how development work is carried on and how resources are harnessed when there is a shortage of funds. To accomplish all this we passed a law last year

and amended our Constitution. What Rajivji had begun has been completed by us.

I wish to ensure that democracy at the grass roots, whether it is a small island or a big city, should be run properly and the people should understand their problems and how these are being solved. If the people get a good grasp of the administration and understand how the Centre and the States play their role and how the local bodies work, our democracy will flourish and democracy will become part of the people's mental make-up.

Speaking of the whole country we need two things. You are the guardians of the country. You are thus our frontier guards and thus occupy an important place in the country. The first of the two things we need is development. We want the country to make progress and reduce the poverty so that the people rise above the poverty line. This country with 90 crores of people is no small country and raising it from poverty and backwardness is no easy task. A small country can make quick progress by investing more money but you cannot secure the kind of money required to raise this nation above poverty even if you were to scour the whole world for funds. The people of this country have to work for it. No outsider can take it over. The elephant stands on his own feet, not with the support or strength of someone else. Since we are like an elephant, our country has to stand on our own feet, with our strength, with the faith and hard work of our people.

Development is thus essential. Since without it we cannot go ahead, but—and this is the second thing I referred to—defence is equally essential. Ours is a vast country and our borders extend over thousands of kilometres. The borders are not impregnable. Anybody can cross them since we have open borders. In this situation we have to provide for the security of such a huge country. The Government is paying attention to both, development and security since they have an interconnection. If the development does not proceed in the right direction and with the required speed it would affect security. If we do not ensure adequate security there

would be so much confusion and problems will arise and that the process of development would be hampered and no developmental programme would be able to make progress. We have thus to work for both and that is what we are doing.

Speaking about development, let me tell you that in the past two and a half years there is not a single programme in which we have not taken strides. Industrial production is going up. Take steel, take fertilizers or any other product we make in India. Year after year we are making progress. The production figures show that progress is being made. At the same time we want industrialisation on a very big scale. This is a vast country and ours is a huge population. But we do not have the required funds which makes us a poor country, a developing country yet. Everyone knows this well and we experience no hesitation in recognising that this is a poor country. If our boys and girls have to be given jobs we need industrialisation on a huge scale so that they would not remain unemployed. Heavy investment, not mere speeches, could bring it about and we came to the conclusion long ago that such investment has to be welcomed from wherever it comes. Whatever funds the Government had with it have already been invested. Perhaps you know that in the past two or three decades we invested Rs. 100,000 crore in the public sector. The investment came from this poor country. The money which we took from the poor was thus invested in the public sector and yet our requirements were not met. Our needs are so large that we require more investment. Some of the public sector undertakings are good, some are not that good. Somewhere the work is satisfactory and somewhere it is not satisfactory, some units show higher output and some show decline. Some units are even standing on the brink of closure.

Thus we are feeling the resource crunch and how much money can we raise from you? How much more can we squeeze out of the poor so as to put it in the public sector? We thus came to the conclusion that we will extend our hand of cooperation to those who have the resources and wish to invest them in Indian industry. This should help us to achieve the goal of speedy and large-scale

industrialisation. I am happy to say that in the past two years we have received fifteen to eighteen thousand crores worth of investment. The Maharashtra Chief Minister was telling me a little while ago, that his State alone had received 30 billion dollars worth of investment, from outside India and from within the country. If you take the other States also into account we would realise that we now have many more industries. More are coming in, so eager they are to put up industries here.

Why is it so? Why would they not go to some other country? We have provided them with facilities which did not exist earlier so that they could invest their money here and further our industrial development programmes. After these facilities were announced and given, their desire to come here was enhanced. In future too, they would be coming to India on a large scale. Apart from the facilities created by us, there is yet another reason for their Indian investment. They cannot find a market as big as India and what they produce here they can also sell here. Barring China, of course, where even bigger investment than here is taking place and many more industries are coming up. The United States and several other countries are making investment in China. They are coming into India also there is no cause for fear or worry for us. There is no reason for us to lose heart. There would be investment in India because of the inherent advantages and the facilities which induce them to come here.

But when this foreign investment on a large scale takes place here, we have to think about our culture, our way of life and our style which must not be affected by it. We are taking sufficient care about it. I wish to assure you completely that foreign capital will work according to our system and on our conditions. The investors will work in accordance with our requirements and no capital will be invested which is beyond our requirements. Anything invested beyond the needs of the people would become unproductive, because the output would not sell. Of course, some of the production could be exported and that again would work to our advantage. Our people would find jobs and while the factory would

be in this country the production would be exported. We are encouraging investors to put up export-oriented industries as exports help us a lot. Many of our programmes are thus making headway and you would be knowing about them because these matters are reported everyday and the news is bound to reach you too.

Then there is the question of trade with other countries. There are quite a few things which we do not produce here. Some people say India could not earlier make pins and is now manufacturing aircraft, (implying that everything we need can be made here). I accept that and we ourselves have been pointing it out that we have made great strides and many things we did not produce earlier are being made in India. But, because the raw materials are not available in India, there are things which we cannot make in this country. Take fertilizers, for example. We can make nitrogenous fertilizers but not phosphatic or potash-based fertilizers. We have either to import the raw materials or import the fertilizers. We spend some three to four thousand crore rupees on it every year.

Similar is the story of edible oils. We produce foodgrains in sufficient quantity but there is a shortage of edible oils. We used to import it from Malaysia and are still importing some quantities. In the past two or three years, however, our farmers did wonders and raised the output substantially. We are still short of palm oil but in the next two or three years we would become self-sufficient. We have thus to make imports until then. Still oil prices are rising and the people sometimes do not understand why this should be so. Perhaps some think that the Prime Minister is doing it but I am not running a shop. The fact is that when a thing is in short supply the prices go up. There is no dearth of people in our country who are ready to push up prices. They smell the shortage of some item and if the gap is only a paise they would push up the prices by ten paise. Take sugar, for example. We were likely to have a bumper crop but due to lack of rain or some other reason, there was a shortfall. The traders came to know about it and in advance they pushed up the prices. What were they losing? There was no earthly reason for

pushing up the prices in this manner. The traders do all this for reaping huge profits. We have, therefore, passed orders for imports (of sugar) on a big scale and this would reduce the prices.

Thus there are some things we do not produce in the required quantity and some we do not produce here at all and imports become necessary. Imports could be had only on payment of dollars or pounds since the rupee would not be acceptable to the suppliers from abroad. The remedy for this situation is that we export our goods and earn dollars. With that foreign exchange you can import what you need, machinery for example. When you set up an industry, 50-year-old machines would not do and you would need brand new machines which you have to import. Some machinery is being made in India also but still you have to import something or the other by way of machinery. Thus foreign exchange becomes essential for your foreign trade. We can get it in the form of deposits by people who bring their foreign money to our country. But, ultimately the deposits in our banks from abroad are a kind of debt.

But the other form of getting foreign exchange is by exports. We are exporting many items of our production, like tea, coffee, some machinery also, some cloth and garments. Quite a few items are thus exported and that enables us to earn foreign exchange. Just as we have trade within the country there is international trade also. The need arose for having a big institution for regulating this international trade. If you have to enter into an agreement with each of your trading partners you would be required to have thousands of such agreements for all the commodities traded. Say, we have trade relations with hundred countries. This is a simple matter which our children can also understand. If you have to enter into an agreement with each of these countries for three or four items which you trade, there would be three or four hundred different agreements.

Which government can handle all these agreements? With which country we have what kind of agreement in respect of what

trade? This would create tremendous problems. So some seven or eight years ago, when Rajivji was the Prime Minister, all the countries together proposed that all the nations should have a common agreement. They proposed that the principles of multilateral trade should be decided. If this was not done, the strong would impose such conditions as would prevent the weak nations from making progress and if they did not accept the conditions they would have to starve. This would be a grave injustice and it was, therefore, agreed that all the countries would sit together and settle the principles of international trade, whether in respect of cloth, oil, machinery, agricultural produce and so on. Different countries have their different interests, France, the United States, India or Pakistan, for example. The institution which brings all nations together is called GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs).

The discussions went on for seven or eight years. There was in between a breakdown of negotiations. Some people walked out saying the others were not cooperating and there could be no agreement. But they again came together because they realised that without an international pact there would be confusion and chaos. After these negotiations, in the end we succeeded in reaching an agreement. India played a prominent part in it. The way in which we pleaded the cause of the developing countries and made efforts to protect their interests, they are grateful to us. In the recent meeting of the G-15 nations they all looked up to India. They were interested in what leadership India was providing, what path India was showing them, how India was fighting on their behalf and so on. India achieved this on behalf of the developing nations. But in our own country, there are some people who cannot bear to see a good development. They find fault with the best thing.

We are ready to answer any question they wish to raise because we have taken the step after great deal of deliberation. We have given full thought to the advantages and disadvantages of the GATT pact and whether it is advantageous to us as a whole or it is disadvantageous. We are not interested in harming the nation nor

can we do that. Let the biggest and the best come but we would not allow ourselves to be pressurised by them. We are ready to carry out any programme which is of benefit to the nation and will do everything possible to achieve it. Where we find that the country is going to be harmed, we will refuse to follow that course. This is how our country has made progress. In the past four decades many people gave us different kinds of advice but we accepted only what suited us and rejected the rest.

When Panditji (Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru) was setting up steel plants he was told why he was doing it when they, the foreign powers, were ready to supply us with finished steel and fertilizers. "Yours is a poor country where will you find so much money from for steel plants," they asked. Panditji replied: "You may give me (steel) today but if you stop supplying in future where will I go? Ours is a vast country and our requirements are large. If I do not have the Bhilai Steel Plant and the Rourkela Plant and if you stop your supplies, because you are angry for some reason or the other, will I then sell my freedom, mortgage it to you? I will never do that." We have to be self-sufficient in all these things, steel, iron, fertilizers, in everything, as far as possible and as much as our resources permit.

How was the Green Revolution brought about in India? In 1965-66 there was a big famine in our country. Indiraji was then our Prime Minister and I know the problems we encountered in procuring foodgrains from abroad. Those people (the foreign powers) caused us so much trouble, they taunted us: "Yours is such a big country and you play the freedom tune but then beg for food from others." Indiraji then decided that we must be self-sufficient in food and in three years she achieved it. Nobody can taunt us now. On the other hand, we are ready to help the needy with some wheat and rice which we can export to them. Indiraji helped other countries in the matter of food so often.

We are not the people to work against the national self-respect, whether it is Dunkel or anybody else. This has been our tradition since the days of Panditji and this tradition would continue

in future too. If we invite people from outside here, it will be on our terms, whether for investment or any other purpose. If anyone builds a road in India he is not going to take away the road with him. People have to understand this properly that we are calling in people involved in infrastructure. We are inviting people to put up power plants. Is the electricity generated by their plants going to be kidnapped? Tell me if in future there is a quarrel between the investor in the power sector and us, what can happen. At the most we will pay him some compensation and ask him to pack up. That is the maximum that can happen. He cannot carry away the road, port or power with him. No doubt, the foreign investor comes to us because he wants to make profits. Who does not want to make profits? Whatever is legitimate he will get it and whatever is legitimate for us by way of completion of projects, those will be completed. Tell me if there is anything wrong here. You should be careful about the propaganda against us, although we are always ready for a crushing reply to the false propaganda.

I have taken much of your time but certain things have to be properly understood and have to be properly explained also. The Government of India belongs to you and you are the same as people in Delhi to the Government. Distance makes no difference. You are to us what the people of Pondicherry are. In fact, you are directly under the Centre and have a direct claim on it. I deem it also my duty to serve the people of the Andamans. We need your cooperation.

We are quite worried about the ecology of your Islands. If the population goes up abnormally and the places get overcrowded and the jungles begin to disappear because there is too much felling of trees, the country would suffer. We have thus to find solution which would enable the young people of the Andamans to go out to other parts of India and find employment there. As others come in here, you people should go out in search of work. It is not possible to establish too many industries here because the resultant pollution would cause permanent damage to your ecology. Elsewhere in the country industries can be set up. Your developmental problem is thus somewhat difficult. While setting up factories we have to consider whether it would not badly affect the environment,

cause inconvenience to the people and disturb the ecological balance.

Still, we have to establish industries here and select such industries as are not destructive of the environment but actually are environment-friendly. Let us march together and understand one another. Here you have created a 'mini India' with people from different parts of the country living and working together in perfect peace and brotherliness. This is your speciality and you must preserve it and not allow it to be disturbed. There will be no difficulty in your progress if peace and fellow feeling continue. If you and we work together what can we not achieve?

Ambedkar—a Crusader of Social Justice

FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY to be present on this sacred occasion and to unveil the statue of a great son of India, I am extremely grateful to you. It does not happen everyday that one gets to perform a good task as the first thing in the day. This happens once in a while and gives one much peace of mind and inspiration. We feel good that we have done a good task and launched a good project. I will go back from here with that inspiration.

Much has been written and said about Babasaheb. Some of us have been familiar from our boyhood, our student days with his ideology, his speeches and his writings and it is easy to recall all that for the benefit of the coming generations and those who are present to listen to me. Reading his works is not enough. What we have to do after we have read about him, what we have to do in future, what

has been accomplished and what remains to be done—we have to think about these matters which alone makes our task meaningful.

It is appropriate that Babasaheb's statue has been installed in Parliament which is an impressive one. His statue here likewise has also much propriety because this was his area of activity. In my view in all the Assemblies of India wherever there are portraits inside or outside, there should be one of Babasaheb also. Propriety arises from the fact that whether it is an Assembly or Parliament, it owes its existence to the Constitution framed by Babasaheb. That is the basis and the maker of that basis has his special place in the creations. We are here for this programme of unveiling his statue and there are similar statues in several other places but if we also instal them in places where they are not existing, the programme would acquire completeness. Thus much of our history would be seen transparently in these Assemblies and Councils. It is in this context that I have referred to the propriety.

We all know the difficulties which Babasaheb had to pass through in his life and the troubles he faced. But with great courage he raised himself to the level where he could launch the campaigns he wanted to conduct. Otherwise he could not have carried on those campaigns. It is essential to know and understand about the forces you are going to confront. When the Indian National Congress decided to oppose the British Government in India, the organisation and its leaders had to acquire full information about that Empire. Otherwise they could not have opposed it. Similarly when Hindu society of that time had to be confronted, one had to know about the *Shastras*, the traditions built up in the name of the *Vedas*, our ancient books on the basis of which a fundamentalist outlook had been cultivated. Anyone who was not acquainted with all this could not have opposed the contemporary society. The opponent had to be a greater scholar than the scholars in the old society and, therefore, where others had failed Babasaheb succeeded. His books and his writings are brimming with his learning and his mission succeeded because of this learning.

Education of oneself, imparting education to others and then organising oneself to achieve one's mission were the three elements in his thinking. If you are organised without education, the form of that organisation is different. Similarly, one could become a learned man but if there is no organisation behind you, the form again is different. Only by combining all three elements, an individual can launch a campaign and by his agitation create a revolution in society. This appears quite clearly in his writings. In my view, what he said then is equally applicable today, applicable to the agitations of today. Agitations and movements will continue for ever. That is a never ending process whether it is the individual or society. There is always some agitation or the other.

But he had drawn an outline before the people of the organisers of such agitations, their capability and ability. We often say that his agitation was for social justice. It is so easy to say that but no individual is to be blamed; the social structure is such that there is injustice. When the individual is blamed for what the group does the view gets distorted. No individual is to be blamed. The structure of this society is such that it has been historically based on discrimination. I am not going into the merits of the system but the *Dalits* were not even included in the *Chaturvarna*, the four castes. The Governor referred to the "consensus of rights". The four (original) castes could have some rights but the *Dalits* were beyond the pale of the *Chaturvarna* and what rights did they have? One could not imagine that they could have any rights. It was a big revolution, a big transformation in society that he brought about. Society also responded because Indian society was not adverse to this thought. There was some dormant consciousness in society but there was a strong layer of tradition over it. This consciousness had to be awakened from each individual and society had to be raised to a new awakening. Because of that he received a response. We have to proceed on the basis that there was a response. Babasaheb did not change every individual or the mental make-up of each individual. But, he created a force and society rose above the hold of customs and conventions and brought to light the basis of social justice. He had the strength to create a sentiment in favour of social justice. That was his big charismatic achievement.

We are engaged in achieving social justice with all our strength after the Constitution came into being. The Constitution is based on social justice but there is a conflict between it and the social structure and this has to be resolved and a balance has to be found. So that the confrontation between the two is removed. This is no easy task and in some of our States this is more difficult. We know how much time it took to name a university after Babasaheb, how much trouble had to be faced and the controversy was raised. I do not wish to say who was at fault and who was not at fault. I consider it the influence of the social structure. I am not doubting the intentions of anyone. The social structure is such that even for a small change you have to make a superhuman effort. Else you cannot accomplish it. The ease with which you can effect changes in society will help forces of social justice to march forward. To the extent it is possible to bring about these changes, we come closer to social justice and the difficulties in bringing about these changes get reduced. To that extent we can say that society as a whole is closer to social justice.

There are still many obstructions and we have to remove them. We sit together and discuss the issues as legislators, ministers who have made the laws and enforced them or not enforced them. Let us ponder and see whether in the past twenty, thirty or forty years the forces of casteism have declined or they have gained more strength. After politics came into play and after political parties became strong, we had to live with the forces which stand for narrow ideas and which are encouraged. This is the stage through which we have to pass. Then the people will realise that this will not do and the country is one. You can rouse emotions in the name of religion and caste and by sloganmongering you can achieve some purpose. But in the end you will have to accept that all this is irrelevant for our political life and our social life. When we reach that conclusion and the people reach that conclusion and everyone realises that this activity of securing immediate advantages by playing upon small things and sectarian feelings will not carry us much forward, the dream of Babasaheb will be fulfilled.

There are innumerable obstructions in achieving that end and we have to remove them. This does not merely mean jobs and offices although they are very much in the picture. If you recall the ancient tale of Vishwamitra and Vashishta you will realise that it was not a conflict of whose penance was greater nor who was greater and whose position was higher. It was something different and questions like those will arise before us and are, in fact, already arising. We have to find a solution and as the country gets integrated and distinctions are abolished one by one, the foundation of our nation and its structure will be strengthened. Nobody will then be able to resort to any chipping of this country, in Kashmir, North-East or elsewhere. This activity will have no place then. But until then you cannot rule them out and you have to fight these forces.

We have gone forward with his message, programme and his resolve but a lot more has to be done to give concrete shape to his resolve and remove the obstacles in the way. We have recently observed the Centenary of his birth and there are several programmes in the universities like establishment of chairs, installation of statues and so on. There is a programme to set up a post-graduate institution, possibly in Lucknow University and there are other programmes. Will this lead to his 'deification'? I want to warn you that when we raise some leader higher and higher, it results in his becoming a demi-god to us. We sometimes build temples in his honour. For Mahatma Gandhi, temples were put up as you know. For God's sake, do not deify Ambedkar. He must continue to be our pathfinder until the very end and until we reach our destination. Do not deify him and do not build temples to him. Do not try to 'dispose' him of by mere prayers and recitations. It is my request to you because I know that this kind of activity goes in our society and Babasaheb must not be a victim of this activity.

It is possible that we would not be in agreement with everything that he has written, or a part of it. Some people did not agree with him even when he was alive. But he is not now controversial as he then was. By and large his reputation has been established. For the whole of India and for our future generations

he is a leader and we have to ensure that this position is maintained. I make this point because in our country many strange things happen and distortions take place. This should not happen in the case of Babasaheb. His life and teachings represent the essence of work and our effort would be meaningful only if we go ahead with that message of work and give concrete shape to his dreams.

We have to think a lot about rights. The people in high offices are in conflict with one another, there is a clash of power and a clash of ego. This clash of power and ego has to be resolved. We have to think of our duty towards the nation. Ask yourself what you are in terms of the nation. We have to think more of this great country and less of ourselves. We inject our ego-clash into the social organisation and a clash takes place in society itself. We should not behave in such a manner that these clashes set the social organisation on fire which then becomes difficult to control. We have to accept that you can be big or small but there is no scope for division of our social structure in this country. Our success lies in bringing people in society together, not in dividing them. History shows that a stage arrives in the life of a society when people work together but again it disintegrates when the destructive forces are active. We are standing at the crossroads and we have to fight the forces of disintegration. We have to be ready for as much sacrifice as is required of us. If we do not stop disunity now, it may be too late. The inspiration we draw from Babasaheb would surely help us in moving towards the path of unity, the path of uniting different elements in society.

The easy tasks have been accomplished, of writing books, writing the Constitution, but what remains is the difficult task of implementing all that and implementing it in the spirit in which Babasaheb understood it. Some of it has of course been accomplished but much remains to be done. I would like to tell all the elected legislators and ministers, sent up by the people, right or wrong—some must have been elected by mistake by the people—that they have a duty to perform, a citizen-plus duty, higher than the citizen's duty. We have to remember the Constitution, there is

Babasaheb's message and there are the aspirations of the people who have sent you here with an authority and you have to achieve a proper coordination of all these things and perform your duty making good use of the authority entrusted to you by the people. I hope we will devote ourselves to this task with this inspiration in our heart.

Ensuring Defence Preparedness

I AM PARTICULARLY grateful to this august House for having shown great sympathy and understanding when I found myself unable to participate in the discussion earlier. Even today, I am glad that my colleague has gone into great detail about the factual situation in the Defence Ministry, DRDO, all the wings of the Defence, etc. I am grateful to him because, otherwise, I would have had to repeat all those things. Facts are there for anyone to see. The Standing Committee on Defence has come out with its second Report which has been presented to the House. Many facts have been mentioned. I am grateful to the Committee also for having brought out certain important needs of Defence and also placed on record where some good work has been done by the Defence Forces and the DRDO.

In the first place, I would like to set the minds of the Honourable Members at rest on certain policy matters which, for some reason or the other, have been figuring in the Press, in the debates here, and in the minds of the people generally.

It has always been the policy of India that a universal, non-discriminatory and comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, accompanied by a universal cut-off of production of missile materials as part of a time-bound programme would be the correct approach to adopt.

There has been no resiling from this position. Members are well aware of the Indian initiative of 1988 at the SSOD-2, the Special Session on Disarmament-2, where an Action Plan was presented on behalf of India. It is not a new thing. But for the first time something which gives certain stages of disarmament and the matching stages of certain other actions to be taken on the other side has been clearly spelt out. The Policy of Disarmament is as old as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. So, there is nothing new. Even before the country became free, the Policy of Nuclear Weapons was adumbrated very clearly by the Indian National Congress. So, I don't find any need to reiterate all those things except to say that we stand by the same position, we stand by the same Policy. There is no change in the Policy at all. Therefore, as a corollary of that, when you take it globally, it means that any other approach falls short of our stand. I would like to clearly assure this House that it is the policy of my Government that India will not accept any regional NPT arrangement. The reason is simple because I am aiming at something which envelopes the whole world. I cannot guarantee that if a particular region is for the time being cleared of all nuclear weapons they will not flow from outside tomorrow. So, who is going to guarantee? I said in the Security Council in the clearest of terms that in the absence of that guarantee, in the absence of a global approach being accepted, there was no real validity or no meaning in having a regional approach. This is what I had stated two years back. Since I have stated it many times, I am now stating it once again if that is going to set at rest the controversy or the doubt arising in the minds of the Members or the people in general.

Now I am happy that there is a total national consensus on this vital issue. I have said so. We have a national position. There is no question of our resiling from the national position.

I have recently stated in this House, while responding to a Starred Question, that when Mr Talbott called on me recently, no pressure had been brought on for signing the NPT or the missile programme of this country. I again wish to make this position abundantly clear and the American side also categorically denied that there had been any type of pressure whatsoever on India during the recent bilateral discussions, either for capping the nuclear programme or for signing the NPT.

The fact of the matter is, if we are not accepting any pressure, no one will exert any pressure on us. On both sides, it is very clear. Why would they do something totally futile when it is not going to work? We think of other areas of cooperation. That is what we did with China. That is what we want to do with Pakistan, if they agree. That is what we do with America. That is what we do with any other country. There are areas of disagreement. There is hardly any example of two countries agreeing to everything hundred per cent. The approach is this. So, there is nothing to be either hidden or obfuscated. This is a very clear thing. In fact, I am sorry to say, the whole thing has been misinterpreted. There was not even a word about capping. How do you cap an experiment? If you cap the production programme, that is a different matter. We are experimenting things. An experiment is something which is done just because we want to be ahead, we want to be abreast of times. That is the important thing for any country to deal with. They did not ask us. They did not ask us to sign the NPT. The days have gone. They have now given up the idea of asking India to sign the NPT, which is itself on its way out. I have explained this. The NPT is now for a review. Yes, If there is a review, I would like to go and participate in the review. I would like to see that the NPT changes its shape, changes whatever content there is, so that it comes in line with our own policy. Is it wrong? Should I not do it? I will certainly like to do that.

So, if there is a review, we will say, "We suggest, we demand, that there should be a review in which there should be a radical change and we should bring about a radical change in the

content of the NPT.” Some others are saying that the NPT will be simply extended in its present form. Then it makes no difference to us because there is no question of signing it. If we did not sign the present NPT, we will not sign the carbon copy of the NPT tomorrow. What is the worry? So, what we really are trying to do is that we are not only trying to enunciate our policy again and again but also trying to convert others, as many as possible, to our line. That is what we should do. That is what India should do. That is what India has always done.

The second point is about Agni, which needs to be explained properly. In 1983, what was the decision? The decision on the programme of 1983 was in regard to experimenting the re-entry test vehicle as conceived in 1983. Now, this is a particular technology which our DRDO wanted to take up and experiment. What has happened during these 11 years is that after a lot of trials as far as the re-entry test vehicle programme, which was later christened as Agni is concerned, the intention was to develop the re-entry test vehicle to specifications leading to the establishment of re-entry technology. Honourable Members know that the most difficult part of the missile technology is the re-entry phase.

Where so much heat is generated, we do not know how to control it; we do not know how to bring it back. We are finding all these things as real problems in space programmes and so on. So, we started this programme. It so happened that recently they completed this experiment and they said, “Now, we have found that we are in a position to get this re-entry successfully done.” What does it signify? It is an experiment. It is a vehicle. It is not a missile. It signifies certain additional capabilities in the upgrading of our missile technology. Now the Government will have to go into further details of this successful experiment. I was talking to my S.A. only this morning; I asked him, “Is the experiment over?” He said, “Yes, one phase of it is over.” There are many variations of this experiment. It should be obvious to anyone that with one experimental flight being successful, you cannot really think that, that is final. First, you will have to get all the data. Now, the flight

data is all right. But there is so much of other data, which need to be documented, which has been done but it has to be analysed; it has to be defined. Certain right conclusions have been drawn from it. So, this process is a long process. I don't say that it will take years and years but it will take some months or a year or a little more than a year. But, at the same time, you can't be doing programmes like this, like a leap in the dark. It has to be properly analysed. This is what we are going to do. Some analysis has started. It has not yet come to me. I have to decide, as Defence Minister and as Prime Minister, what exactly is the implication of all these things which are brought before me. So, it is in that stage. I would like to assure the Members that there is no capping of anything at this stage. There is nothing of the sort. It is an experiment. This experiment will, certainly be taken up in all its variations according to whatever stages they want or whatever phases they want... (Interruptions)

A MEMBER : And no denial of funds.

PRIME MINISTER : No. That is, again, another fabrication, I don't know where it came from. To say that the Government of India has stopped the programme because it didn't want to give Rs. 50 crore, anybody can say that. But, at least, those who want to believe it, we should appreciate them. (Interruptions)

A MEMBER: Why not contradict such reports?

PRIME MINISTER: It has been contradicted, very strongly contradicted. But I am saying, in this country, for heaven's sake, don't believe things like that. Such an absurd thing that a programme which is otherwise important from the DRDO's point of view would be stopped because I don't have Rs. 50 crore.

One very important suggestion has been made by the Honourable Members and that is about the National Security Council. Last year, I had occasion to say that I was veering round to the view that in view of the extreme complexities of the situation, we should have a National Security Council in India. Since then,

I have got this matter examined in great detail. Honourable Members will appreciate that national security does not mean national defence only but it is much wider than that and the entire concept has to be brought into the ambit of the National Security Council. We have come to the conclusion that it has to be set up in this variegated form; in this form, it takes into account all elements which impinge on our national security.

I will not go into any of the factual details. If any details are needed, there is no problem about that. But I would like, in a very brief time, to dwell on the general situation of the world as you find it today and after the cold war. We have been saying for the last 5-6 years that the cold war has ended. This is an obvious truth which has been repeated times without number. But today, we have to pause a little and ask ourselves whether we understand or the world understands or all the world powers understand perfectly what the implication of the end of the cold war is. If the cold war has ended and our business is as usual, then it means that we have not understood the end of the cold war, the implication of the cold war. And I am also in a position to say, to the extent of my own knowledge and thinking, that I don't think that the entire gamut of changes that constitute the end of the cold war, that will certainly follow the cold war, that are again following even now the end of the cold war, have unfolded themselves. They will unfold in course of time and we will have to be pragmatic enough, to be alert enough to go on taking note of what all changes come and how we react to those changes. Therefore, the end of the cold war is not just the end of the cold war. It is something else. It requires a much greater vigilance on the part of all the countries, and particularly India because India has a particular role, has had a particular role, to play while the cold war was on and we cannot be abandoning the goal while the cold war has ended. In reality, what do we mean by the end of the cold war? By cold war itself, let me in my own humble way try to explain.

The cold war is a very short interval in the history of the world. There was something before the cold war started. There is now going to be something very different after the cold war has ended, except that the cold war itself was conditioned by certain things happening before, and the cold war itself is going to influence the events after it has ended. So, it is a continuum. We cannot take the cold war as a separate entity for all purposes, historical purposes. And a certain political analysis has to be dependent on the cold war situation. But there is a continuum. This continuum also has to be understood. For instance, if there have been some disputes exacerbated by the cold war era, the disputes were there, most of them, even before the cold war. At least, the seeds of the disputes were there. It is possible that because of the cold war, it suited the actors in the cold war to take advantage of them. So, to expect that the end of the cold war would end those problems is not realistic. You have to still work for it. What has happened is that, working for peace, working for the resolution of those problems has become easier as a result of the end of the cold war. That is all one can say. It has facilitated our efforts to end the conflicts. Have they ended? Somewhere they are on the point of ending, on the way of ending; somewhere they have not ended. In fact, after the cold war, something has started. In Yugoslavia, for instance, it was not the result of the cold war. It did not burn as it is burning today. It started after the cold war. Therefore, cold war has a particular connotation in the history of the world, and that particular connotation is limited.

Today, we have to think of what is to be done in the next century and the century after that, which means that cold war will be forgotten. But that will not usher in total peace by itself. We have to work for it. This is what I am trying to say. It is becoming easier for us to work for peace. But we have to work. There is no question of anybody else working for us and bringing peace for us. There is a register on the disarmament side. There have, however, been some positive developments like the conclusion of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which is a universal, non-discriminatory, and equitable regime. This is what we want. Some have been

accepted, some are being accepted. We are saying, accept everything, and accept it within a time frame. Don't accept tomorrow if it is not possible. We also know that it is not possible to end everything in one day. Yes, Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 Programme had put it at 2010. You can make it 2015 or 2005. In fact, I thought that since the cold war has gone, it could be by the end of the century. All these are flexible. But the point is the principle that we must have peace, we must have disarmament, we must not have the arms of destruction any more in the world. This is important. This decision is important. This determination is important. Once that is assured, then the programme will follow. You can always change the programme here and there, you can reorient the programme. But the principle needs to be accepted. That is what we have to fight for. That is what India has been fighting for. So, there is no alternative but to make efforts for peace, cold war or no cold war.

Today, it is said that there is only one Superpower and, therefore, there can be no non-alignment. I would like to say—of course, this would go into the domain of External Affairs—I would certainly like to say that the scenario as we find, it is fraught with so many dangers for the developing world that it is just not possible for us to close our eyes and think that since there is no cold war today, all our problems have come to an end. The developing countries have to become more vocal. They have to be united. The G-15 is the symbol of that unity. We have been trying to keep it as active as we can and we shall certainly continue those efforts. At the same time, we have to cooperate on the economic side. This is the most important thing. No country which continues to be weak, continues to be dependent for even small things on other countries, will ever be able to stand and say: 'I am independent'. Yes, that may have the trappings of independence but real independence that country will never have.

And for India, particularly, it is important that our economic sinews are strong. If we cannot make them strong, all our rhetorics will be just wasted. No one is going to take it seriously. This is

where the policies that we have been following, according to our likes become important. Not all will agree; not everyone will agree, naturally. These policies are meant to make India strong so that there is a complementarity between your political clout, or clout as a country with a message. Political clout—what for? What is it meant for? It is meant for bringing in something which you consider good for the world. If you are weak, no one is going to listen. If you are strong, if you are self-reliant, if the sinews of the economy are good, then they will say; “Yes, here is a country which is doing business with us, at the same time influencing us.” The stronger India is, the more will be the influence of India, Indian politicians, Indian Prime Minister, Indian Ministers, Indian Members of Parliament, in changing the course of events.

This is how I equate things. It is a rather short kind of equation. There may be so many other niceties in it but the point is this. And this is where the entire policy framework of the Government of India, as we are following it today, makes a sensible whole. It is not a policy of disoriented or completely separated parts; it is a whole, and that is how we have conceived it. So, I want the Honourable House to appreciate that there is this unity about the policy and as a result of this unity, we would like to forge ahead. We want our neighbours to cooperate because if it is a region, it is the whole region that counts. If it is a particular part of the world, say, orient, the whole orient counts. If it is the whole globe, the whole globe counts. But the point is that there has to be a certain amount of self-reliance and working together in a region, in a bigger region, in a subregion. What we are really facing in our neighbourhood itself. All our sights are global but when you are being embarrassed from your neighbourhood, you cannot possibly forget it. You will have to talk about it. You will have to think about it. You will have to see something to be done to sort it out through friends, through direct negotiations, through pressures, friendly pressures.

All this will have to be done. At so many levels, we will have to be acting. At the level of defence preparedness—that, of course,

is something which you can never dilute. That I have assured this House several times and I would like to assure once again that it is a part of the entire activity of a nation. The most important part is your preparedness. Ensuring that, then comes your efforts at diplomacy, your efforts at making friends, your efforts at giving this message to people because you have had this message for thousands of years. It is not as if you have to take a message from someone and relay it to someone else. The message is there in our own society, in our own traditions for thousands of years. Therefore, it is our capability of being the harbingers of this message, the carriers of this message.

If we are weak, we cannot carry this message. This is what I would like to say.

In this context, defence preparedness has its own very, very important place. I would like to assure the House that it will be ensured. To the extent we can, it will be ensured. It is for us to decide as to what are our needs. Nobody need tell us our needs. Our needs may vary from time to time, but it is for us to decide.

On the Chinese question, if we succeed in deciding the border or settling the border, the scenario becomes totally different. On the other hand, if the North-Eastern States become more and more violent and more and more problems are there, then, nobody is a permanent friend. One should understand that. I think we all understand this perfectly well.

Base behaviour is today's behaviour. We would like to see that this behaviour is improved on all sides. If we are right, if we are good, if we are having a stand which is not full of duplicity, the others also may reciprocate, will reciprocate. We do not want anybody's territory and nobody can have an evil eye on our territory. This is very clear.

Therefore, within these parameters, the Defence Policy of India will be pursued relentlessly; the Foreign Policy of India will be pursued. Both will be merged into an overall policy which projects India's image, India's message and India's vision.

Upholding the Ideals of Azad Hind Fauj

IT IS A privilege to participate in this function today to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Azad Hind Fauj. We have assembled here in reverence to remember the thousands of our countrymen, notably the heroes of Azad Hind Fauj who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of our country.

The Azad Hind Fauj was an army of devoted and dedicated volunteers who heedless of the inadequacy of the ammunitions, food and facilities fought with tremendous grit and bravery for the freedom of the country. When we remember the Azad Hind Fauj, we recall with deep respect, the great spirit behind this dedicated force, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. Netaji was rightly called a beacon across Asia. The sagacity political leadership and vision sought to encompass, not only Asia and Europe but the entire world. His was a personality without a parallel. He was an administrator, politician, freedom fighter, thinker, soldier and above all a great visionary.

Netaji's role in South East Asia as Head of the Indian Independence League, and as Commander-in-Chief of the Indian National Army was a very important aspect of the final phase of our struggle of freedom.

At the invitation of revolutionary like Ras Bihari Basu, Pritem Singh, Col. Mohan Singh and others, Netaji agreed to take over the leadership of the Indian National Army and named it Azad Hind Fauj. He motivated his fellow freedom fighters and mobilised material and resources to fight the British. The slogan like "Delhi Chalho" and "Give your blood, I will give you freedom" fired the imagination of the masses. These slogans resounded through the country and inspired the Azad Hind Fauj to try to defeat the British

and reach Delhi. When Netaji visited Japan on 1st of November 1944, the Japanese made a comment which was a compliment to the effort of Subhash Babu.

The Japanese were eventually beaten back and the prospect of Azad Hind Fauj liberating the nation faded away. The members of the Azad Hind Fauj were brought back home by British and faced the prospect of severe punishment. But such had been the love and admiration that there was an outcry across the country in defence of Azad Hind Fauj, which in turn powerfully reinforced the spirit and determination to win freedom. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru hailed the soldiers of the Azad Hind Fauj as patriots and called for lenient treatment to them. The AICC at its post war session in Bombay in September 1945 adopted a strong resolution declaring its support for this cause. The Congress took up the defence of the members of the INA and some of you may remember the glorious scene of some of the most eminent lawyers of those days, Gulab Bhai Desai, Tej Bahadur Sapru, K. N. Kachru and Panditji himself donning the lawyers gown and appearing in court at the historic Red Fort trials.

The campaign in support of the members of the INA is noteworthy for the intensity of patriotism it aroused. The Director of the Intelligence Bureau at the time noted that there has seldom been a matter which attracted so much Indian public attention. The treatment of the INA members became a test of British good faith towards India. The growing nationalist sentiment that focussed on the trials led to many forms of expression, the most notable being the naval soldiers revolt in Bombay in February 1946. This was followed by popular demonstrations and strikes against foreign rule further cementing the country-wide solidarity. These were the stirring times when the national movement was reaching its zenith.

I wish to recall on this occasion, two great dimensions of Netaji's vision of the future of India. One was his unshakeable faith in secularism and the other was the status of the equality he envisaged for the Indian women. These are two important pillars of the Constitution of India and we should do everything to uphold these great ideals of Netaji.

It is appropriate therefore, that we recall with respect the dedication, sacrifices of the members of the Azad Hind Fauj. In Netaji's own words, "Our officers and men displayed such courage and heroism that they have earned the praise of everybody." With their blood and sacrifice, these heroes have established traditions, which the future soldiers of India will have to uphold now. Our best tributes to the martyrs of the Azad Hind Fauj are to uphold the ideals for which Netaji and a thousands of other martyrs laid down their lives so that we may live in freedom.

Indian Navy Embarks on a Path of Self-reliance

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be present here at the historic occasion of commissioning of second indigenously built diesel electric submarine, INS-Shankul. The commission of Naval vessel is always a very important event for all those, who have participated in building it. Ships and submarines differ from other defence material because of their long lives and high unit costs. INS-Shankul is the second diesel electric submarine being built in India and 4th of the series with our Navy. The first two having been built in Germany, it was planned to construct four submarines at the Mazagaon Docks Ltd. This programme had however to be curtailed because of resource crunch and other factors.

The Indian Navy had embarked on a path of self-reliance in defence vessel constructions since the early 1960s. Indigenous

capability was further upgraded for building submarines at MDL since the early 1980s. It is the sustained hard work and collaborative effort of the MDL and our industries and research institutes that have helped India to attain the status of a submarine building nation. It is a matter of pride and satisfaction to all of us that the Indian Navy has today become a builders Navy.

This is proved positive that the nations have resolved to learn to do things themselves. The Indian Navy has been in the forefront of the indigenisation efforts whether in the matter of indigenisation of weapons, sensors or other equipment in collaboration of DRDO or PSUs, Indian private sector industries. Self-reliance with us is a strategic objective because it provides the nation autonomy in making its own decisions, chalking its own path of development and preservation of culture and that is valuable to us as a nation. India has had a long maritime tradition since time immemorial. Our marines along with other commodities of trade have carried out our culture and our message of peace and goodwill far away across several oceans. However with the advent of invaders from the North and West, our maritime traditions and the importance of the Navy went into a decline. Soon thereafter India was colonised from across the seas by European nations with their small naval forces. This is a lesson of history that our country can ill afford to forget. Our maritime interest extends to our large offshore oil production asset, fishing and exploitation of the seabed resources in our exclusive economic zone and to the protection of our maritime trade routes. It is a task of our Navy to protect national interest and to deter and prevent war in the seas.

The Navy is prepared to take active measure when it is necessary to safeguard our sea lanes of communication. A balanced fleet with ships including aircraft-carriers for air defence, submarine and maritime aircraft is, therefore, of inestimable value for the Navy. Over the last few years, the defence budget had to be reduced because of our serious resource crunch. As a consequence the Navy budget had to be pruned. Indigenous construction programmes in various areas also have to be adjusted. But you will

be happy to note that the Government have now increased the fund support for the Naval programme. INS-Shankul which I am commissioning today is a national asset epitomising our resolve to attain self-reliance. Our individual strength will essentially be for our self-defence. We neither wish to control the oceans around us nor to deny others their legitimate use or equitable access to the seas either on the surface or below it. However we will not countenance any violation of our sovereign space and any restriction of our freedom to safeguard our national maritime interest.

Two-way Process of Communication Brings Success

THE SUBJECT OF information or, in wider sense, mass communication has assumed great significance of late, especially for a developing country like ours. An exchange of views with State Information Ministers at this juncture is, therefore, important and timely. While it is true that mass communication in a greater or lesser degree has always been a part of human activity, it has really come into its own in the 20th century, primarily due to the tremendous technological advances which have transformed the reach, coverage, speed and quality of communication as never before.

The vast majority of the people in the world today cannot manage without access to information whether through the written word, the spoken word, the electronic media, films, live performances or other forms of communication. Purpose of information may be varied to inform, enlighten, educate or simply to entertain but its requirement is more or less universal.

Given this background I would request the participants of this conference to deliberate seriously and come up with concrete and workable strategies covering the whole gamut of mass communication particularly in the context of a developing economy like ours where the Government continues to be the prime mover for developmental activities and where the level of awareness among the people still needs to be raised. Both the Central and State governments have a large shelf of programmes and schemes which have been formulated to improve the quality of life of our people. Crores of rupees are spent annually in implementing them. Unfortunately, it cannot be denied that the tangible benefits accruing to the intended beneficiaries from the schemes leave much to be desired.

There are serious shortcomings that exist in implementation which could be due to a variety of reasons like misplaced priorities, wrong choice of schemes, corruption, local politics, administrative lethargy. The cause of many of these maladies is the ignorance and lack of awareness that exists among the beneficiaries. The fact is that a large number of people are not aware of the schemes, of what they intend to achieve, how they will actually benefit them, what the procedures involved are, which officials have to be approached to gather details or to ventilate grievances and so on. Disseminating information about a scheme is vital for its success. Publicity, or marketing as it is called in modern management jargon, has to be an integral part of a scheme. The remedy lies in creation of an appreciable degree of awareness through systematic and effective dissemination of information of both the Central and State governments. At the same time, while doing this, it has to be ensured that the campaigns are designed in a manner whereby adequate and genuine feedback is received from the people. Communication has to necessarily be a two way process if it is to be successful.

The business of information should not be the preserve of a handful of officials working in the Information departments. All government functionaries in the rural areas, especially those handling developmental programmes, must be involved in the process

of communication. Officials at the district and block levels of a particular department should also be familiar with programmes and schemes of other departments. Since information relating to other departments may also be sought from them by the people, there is a danger of wrong information being spread if the concerned official is not familiar with the programmes of other departments. The orientation of field level functionaries has to be comprehensive and well-rounded to avoid such a possibility.

A complaint commonly heard from information officials is that other government departments are slow in feeding information to them. This may be true and should never be allowed to happen. But it is clearly laced with irony. It is the task of information officials to gather and give out information. They are in the business of information and motivating people. They should by their training and persuasive skills be ever persevering in their task. If they themselves lose motivation, how do they expect to motivate others.

Beyond these officers and government departments, by far the most important persons to be trained and oriented are the Panchayat leaders. They are our link with the people, the most vital link. They should be involved closely in all information programmes because it is they who can best carry out the two way flow of information that we seek to achieve. And in the process they can become very good educators on behalf of the government programmes because they know the jargon, they know the language, they know what the people understand and perhaps the time has come in the context of the new Panchayats coming into being. To make every Panchayat an agency of information, disseminating information and education to the people on behalf of the government, this is what we have to try and perhaps this is the new opportunity which is coming our way. We should take full advantage of this.

Another important area of concern is the lack of coordination between the Central and State governments in dissemination of information. We cannot work in watertight compartments at

least in this field of activity. Even for Central schemes, it is the State government, in most cases which is the implementing agency. Unless the media units of the Central and State governments work in tandem, the optimum results cannot be achieved. After all, when our larger objectives are the same, we should not allow any minor differences to come in the way. The Inter-media Publicity Coordination Committees which exist in all States could be the proper forum for effective interaction in this regard.

I find that the problems of the film industry, particularly relating to entertainment tax, is listed in today's agenda. I also find that representatives of the film industry are present. There is no doubt that the levels of entertainment tax being levied by the States affect the film industry. However, the State governments are also required to mobilise and augment their resources through tax and non-tax collections. There is a strong case to look at this problem in all its dimensions and throw up useful suggestion which could be examined further.

Deep concern has been expressed both in Parliament and outside regarding increasing obscenity, vulgarity and violence in films. I feel that this concern is not misplaced since none of us would like a whole generation of young men and women to be constantly exposed to such grossness. While the primary responsibility in this regard rests with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, I would like to request the State governments to also address themselves to this problem. They could initiate a dialogue with the film industry representatives, particularly in States like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and West Bengal where a large number of films are produced. Self-regulation is the best antidote, but in case it fails to work, we will certainly have to fall back on other measures.

Another point which is exercising the minds of many people relates to the Newsprint Policy. While the public sector units manufacturing newsprint feel threatened due to the import of cheaper newsprint by the newspaper industry, we cannot ignore the

genuine constraints and aspirations of the newspaper industry, since 60-70 per cent of the cost of bringing out a newspaper is on account of newsprint. The Government is seized of the problem. A decision will have to take into consideration all aspects of this issue.

As regards the electronic media, India is being subjected as never before to the programmes from abroad through satellite communication. Because of this, I find a lot of ill informed and short-sighted criticism being made in respect of Doordarshan and Akashvani. It has to be remembered that the official electronic media cannot be only an entertainment channel as they have definite social commitments to fulfil. While I agree that there should be no compromise in the quality of the programmes and the people must be given the best, this cannot be at the cost of diluting the larger objectives of informing and educating the people. We have no intention of preventing satellite communication from abroad, especially in the backdrop of the overall liberalisation. But our own priorities have to be clearly defined and effectively implemented so that the benefits of development can reach the poorest of the poor. At the same time, Doordarshan and AIR have a lot to learn from foreign programmes, even if they do not emulate them in every way. This subtle difference needs to be understood and kept in view.

The coverage of Doordarshan and All India Radio has expanded tremendously during the last decade. We intend to continue with this expansion especially in the far flung and remote areas. In this endeavour, we need the whole hearted cooperation of the State governments by way of providing land, adequate power and security to the installations. Central Government media units like Doordarshan, All India Radio and Press Information Bureau generally become the first targets of attack by terrorists and militants and the State governments have the prime responsibility to ensure security to the staff and the property of these organisations. We have had some bitter experiences in the past, that is why, I am making a special point on this.

In a predominantly rural country like ours, the non-electronic media units like Directorate of Field Publicity, Press Information Bureau, Song and Drama Division and DAVP have a big part to play since the print, visual and interpersonal communication have a wider reach in villages and small towns. These units are crucial in our scheme of things and need to be fully geared to meet the tasks that lie before us. Here again, the State governments have to assist the functionaries of these units so that they are able to meet and involve the village level leaders and opinion makers like Panchayat members, village chiefs, to whom I have just made a reference.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to one very important aspect of this communication. Recently, when I went to the United States, some of our Indian scientists called on me. They gave a presentation of the information revolution, the information era, that's coming which is really mind-boggling, absolutely mind-boggling. We could not have imagined such a thing happening. Even now it is very difficult to imagine that in the next two or three years all these things are going to happen.

The point is how far do we run after these things and where do we land. We have a certain tempo in our society. Now, if this tempo is totally disrupted, it looks very difficult for us to have the rhythm again, come back to national life. I have been rather worried about this. The lure for running after things without knowing the meaning, without knowing the implications of this influx, that lure is very strong but I have a feeling that it is not going to take us very far. For instance, they showed me how you can talk to somebody in America, somebody in South-Africa to adjust that morning time whenever you want, you press a button and the picture comes and you have a picture conference there on the spot. So you don't have to bother about waiting. All kinds of things they showed us. Now, this can be done. It is a matter of more money perhaps, more technological know-how coming to us, which is not difficult, you can buy them. They are not sensitive or they will themselves come and and set up things for us. But ultimately what is the software?

This is where I have not been given very much light either by scientists or experts or anyone. What are we really telling the people? How do we tell the people? We have been told, there are so many gadgets, you press one button something wonderful happens, another button another wonderful thing happens and things like that. But all these will wear out, their novelty will wear out in a month, in two months, in three months. Films for instance, how much can you show, how much of whatever a person, a man, a woman is wearing, can you cut off and in this race of cutting off where do you stop ? If you don't stop what do you really find? These are the things about which one gets a little worried about. Ultimately, we have a civilization of our own, which has been there for thousands of years. We are proud of it. Not that it has been the same. No one can say that the Indian civilization which is five thousand years old was exactly what it was five thousand years ago as it is today. No one says that, but we have our own tempo. The change, the rate of change, the manner of change, the method of change, all this is woven into the civilization of the country and you cannot get out of it. If you get out, you are out of step with your civilization, you are out of step with your life, with national life.

So, what you will be showing to the people or telling the people, they will not be able to follow. They will be impressed, but then where does that leave them, where does that leave the process of educating, even entertaining ?

Take entertainment itself, there have to be some limits or some lines beyond which you don't cross. Now, if this is not done then probably the society itself will become rudderless. Do we want that to happen ? Do we want to experiment with that, see what happens if it becomes rudderless, see what happens if all the values ever known, we are not really living upto them. None of us is. But still they are there. They are there because they have been there for a long time. Even five thousand years ago they were not hundred per cent being implemented. They had their sanctity, they had their effect on the minds of the people, on the thinking of the people. There we had 'Duryodhana', we had 'Ravana', we had all these

characters coming from so many thousands of years. So you cannot say that the Indian society has always been a society of saints. It is not so. But it is the mixture of these characters plus the interaction of good and evil and the immense hope that eventually good will prevail over the evil, that these are the things that have sustained this society for thousands of years. In many cases these beliefs proved to be wrong. It is very easy to prosper on the basis of vice but then you don't believe it and belief is something which you can't wish away, you can't get out of. So, these things have to be preserved. We call them values, we call them beliefs, we call them by whatever name we want to, but they are there. This is one thing.

Now, the other thing as I just said, what are you going to tell the people. How you are going to tell them is all known, may be much better, and still better methods, and still quicker methods, more effective methods and all these are coming. But ultimately you have to tell something to the people and that is the software. What is the software going to be ? If we do not take care of the software, the hardware part of it, the 'how' part of it, may be you will be left behind for sometime but then when you have enough money, you will catch up. The 'how' part of it is easy of the whole. The 'what' part of it is more difficult and that is what we have to work on day in and day out. All our writers, all our thinkers, all our film magnets, everyone who is making anything for public consumption has to think about this. It is the software, it is that 'what' part that has to be taken care of. We are not taking care of that, I am afraid to say.

This, perhaps, may not be an appropriate subject for this conference, but I don't see why it should not. You think of other people to join you, you think of others, who are even today under very difficult circumstances doing something to educate the people; they have a right to be here, they have a right to be heard and you have an obligation to hear them. It is not just the information and if you do only the 'how' part of it, I must say that it is a lopsided approach. Have the approach fully rounded on by making the other

side also come, the 'what' part of it, and then you will have a complete answer to the questions of communication that you have. Technically I have no quarrel with any amount of technical sophistication so long as the country can afford it, so long as the people can afford it. That is something which I have no doubt in telling you right now. So, please go ahead and see if the deliberations of this conference can be made complete by adding, what I think would be lacking as we find the agenda here and perhaps only then you will get the complete whole.

II

Economic Scene

Economy Poised for Higher Growth

I WELCOME YOU all to this 46th meeting of the National Development Council. We are meeting today to discuss a number of issues and strategies that are crucial to the balanced growth, development and progress of the country. I am grateful to you for finding time from your busy schedules to attend this extremely important meeting. Today's deliberations should help us to concretise a national agenda of concerted action in the crucial areas of employment, population control, literacy and people's involvement in the development process.

Though there are signs today that the economic situation is brightening, we cannot be complacent. It is true that we have come a long way from those difficult days of 1991, when inflation was tending to go out of control, there was a crisis in the balance of payments and resources were so hard to find that there were doubts whether we would have an Eighth Plan at all. Today, all this is behind us. Inflation is under control. 1992-93 has been an extremely good agricultural year and prospects of another good agricultural year have brightened with the recent rains. Exports in the first four months of this financial year have shown extremely good growth, with growth rate currently at over 27 per cent, giving rise to the belief that we would be able to achieve the annual targeted growth rate of 20 per cent. After several months of disappointing performance, industry has again recorded a growth rate of about 4 per cent in May 1993 and indications are that recession on the industrial front is coming to an end. There is renewed investment activity spurred on by the decision to lower interest rates and the economy is poised for higher growth during 1993-94.

The economic reforms initiated by us have begun to yield results. For these to succeed, however, the complete cooperation and help of State governments is essential. Investment and industrial production have been freed from restrictions. However, basic infrastructure such as land, power, water and roads will have to be provided by the States. The role of the States in this effort is, therefore, absolutely crucial. I would like to urge all the Chief Ministers to extend the required facilities to the new entrepreneurs. There is a great deal of variation in the facilities being extended by different State governments. I request the States to study the measure initiated by some of the more progressive States and emulate their example, for this will help ensure ushering in balanced industrialisation in the country faster. After all, it is the States themselves who would benefit in the short and long-term by rapid industrialisation.

Owing to various problems, Plan performance during 1992-93 was not satisfactory in many areas. In certain key sectors such as agriculture and employment generations and in the matter of overall economic growth, there was substantial progress. About 6 million new job opportunities were created during the year. Though this was a significant achievement, it is still below the annual target of about 9 million jobs. This calls for a much faster rate of economic growth in general and in sectors of high employment potential in particular. With a view to further stepping up employment and thus improve the living conditions of the disadvantaged groups, we have laid great stress in the Annual Plan 1993-94 on investment in rural development, agriculture, education, health and the social welfare sectors in general. We must ensure that targets are fully achieved in all these sectors during this year. Despite serious shortage of resources, we have still made larger allocations for these sectors and therefore it must be ensured that the funds are spent effectively and without leakage to create assets that help in sustained increase in productivity and employment generation.

Mobilisation of resources for the Plan is a task of paramount importance. When we discussed the Austerity Report in the last

NDC meeting, insufficient resource mobilisation effort was identified as one of the key reasons for shortfalls in the achievement of Plan targets. State governments must make a major breakthrough in this area through greater tax efforts, better collection, increase of non-tax revenues and realistic pricing of services. Certain States have taken a number of positive steps and their experience could be of help to others.

A distinctive feature of the Eighth Five Year Plan is its focus on human development. It is because of the importance we attach to human development that we have accorded the highest priority to literacy, education, health, drinking water, nutrition, employment generation and population control in the Plan. Ensuring progress in all these sectors which enhance investment in human capital is the primary responsibility of the Government, whether at the Centre or in the States. As I have been consistently emphasizing, our basic approach to development requires greater Government involvement and not less, particularly in the social sectors of development. No country can ever hope to develop, if its most basic resource namely, human resource, is not nurtured and developed. We, therefore, need to greatly intensify our efforts in this area.

It is against this background, that today's meeting assumes great significance. Experience everywhere and our own tells us that literacy and education are fundamental for development. They help in the spread of awareness about all inputs relevant to development, be it the small family norm or a new variety of seed. Unfortunately, our achievements so far in this area have not been satisfactory compared to certain other developing countries in our neighbourhood. In recent years, however, we have made a little faster progress and the goal of universal literacy in the age-group 15-35 years appears to be within our reach. In this effort, the role of people's institutions and voluntary agencies are not only important but decisive. We must all work, therefore, together to ensure that the national targets are achieved within the Eighth Plan. To achieve this, a special drive will have to be launched to improve literacy among women and also amongst Scheduled Castes and

Tribes and other groups that are educationally backward. We must achieve the goal of education for all by the turn of the century and the international community is watching with keen interest, India's endeavour in this field.

An equally important task before us is to improve the health and nutritional standards of our population. Perhaps, this will not be achieved fully until and unless we succeed in controlling our rapidly growing population. The prospects of our assuring a reasonable standard of living to all our people depend greatly on our ability at limiting the size of our population. We have to bring in a pattern of development that meets this objective. This would call for the total involvement of the people in the programme. Also, an effective scheme of incentives and disincentives has to be carefully devised. This is one area that does not brook any more delay. The time to act is now and I am glad that we have this vital issue before us in today's agenda.

Poverty cannot be eradicated without the generation of adequate employment. Near full employment by the end of Ninth Plan i.e. 2001 is our goal. We have the strategies required for this. Agriculture provides two-thirds of the employment in the economy and so the main contribution to greater employment generation will need to come from this sector. Agriculture's share in total investment has, however, been falling. It declined from nearly 19 per cent in 1980-81 to about 11 per cent now. The Eighth Plan envisages that the economy will allocate 18.65 per cent of investment to agriculture. This can be ensured only if the State Plans are fully implemented, as the States have a larger responsibility in agriculture. It is also necessary to influence, through policies, investment in favour of agriculture in the private sector. The whole question of ensuring greater allocation of credit to agriculture and the rural sector and the efficiency and viability of the credit delivery system for achieving this are important issues requiring solution urgently. The Planning process also has to be used to create appropriate incentives for private investment in the regions where agricultural productivity has remained low.

We have other strategies and programmes that seek to promote direct employment such as Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, the IRDP and self-employment schemes for the educated in the urban sector. Our attempts in all these employment generation programmes should also be to build durable assets and we need to modify and improve our employment schemes to ensure this. I am confident that the Assured Employment Scheme in the 1752 most backward blocks of the country and the expanded Urban Employment Scheme for the educated unemployed recently announced by me would contribute to this twin objective of greater employment and the rapid building of durable socio-economic infrastructure that is productive.

Our backlog in human development cannot be removed in the foreseeable future without involvement of the people in the process of planning and development. Constitutional provisions are now in place for village level institutions. The principal task before the Central and the State governments is to earnestly develop and nurture village level institutions for taking up the task of development in their own areas. With the will to decentralise and involve the people in concerns of their own development, we should be able to multiply manifold, the benefits that should accrue from the resources, that we are able to set apart for development.

We are at a crucial stage in the implementation of our agenda for economic reforms and development. Much would depend on the action we take at the Centre and in the States in the next few months. Resources for development must be generated. All Plan targets must be achieved. Efforts to eradicate illiteracy and want must be intensified. But this cannot be done by the Centre alone or by a few States. All of us must contribute to this national effort and more importantly the message must percolate down to all the levels including the block and village levels. If this is done, I am confident that we shall be soon seeing a new and dynamic India on the march.

Handloom Development

AFTER SEVERAL YEARS we have again begun to take the view that the handloom sector, which holds an important position in our economy, needs resuscitation. A couple of years ago, we received complaints from several places that the condition of some weavers was so bad that several of them had died of hunger. The issue was debated and there were complaints in Parliament, and possibly there were similar complaints in your Assemblies too. On behalf of the government it was stated that the deaths were due not to hunger but illness.

Some eight months were spent in this debate as to how the people concerned had died. Often we find that whenever an issue arises we do not go to the root of it and it gets diverted. I will tell you a story. A woman was cooking something in her small hut. The hut was destroyed in the fire lighted by her. An inquiry was instituted and the first question raised was, what the woman was doing, what was she cooking. The real issue was not that; the real issue was how the hut caught fire and what should be done for that. Whenever a complaint comes before you it could be taken in the right spirit or in a wrong spirit, but even if you keep it aside, try to find out what the condition of the people is. So, in the past year and a half or two years we began to think about this problem of the weavers and we came to the conclusion, as the situation was squarely faced, that their condition had deteriorated considerably as compared to the situation before. If we did not do something about it, starvation would continue, today and in future too. It would not do to close our eyes to it and deny the fact of starvation. We have to find a solution.

We applied ourselves to the task. In 1985, in Rajivji's time, he got a law passed and paid attention to this issue before doing anything else. The law was for reservation for 22 items. We thought

that we would benefit thereby but what we got instead was a series of court cases. I do not know how many writ petitions were filed then. There were stay orders from many courts, barring the International Court of Justice. Whenever we seek to do a good thing, a stay order definitely follows. That is right too because the law is such and our Constitution is such that you cannot deprive anybody of his rights. Whenever you can show that somebody's rights are being violated, a stay order follows. That took eight years. Ultimately, the issue came before the Supreme Court which set aside all the objections and complaints and declared the law valid. That was in 1993 by which time eight years had passed. Simultaneously, the other order on handicrafts, which was also subjected to the same legal objections, was also validated by the Supreme Court which saved the Act and gave it a new life.

Who will be held responsible for these eight years of silence, eight years of difficulties and of inaction? Neither the Government is responsible, nor the poor weavers. Some people, who thought their interests would suffer went to court and the matter dragged on for eight years. When this obstruction was removed, some work was done, some meetings were held. Some people were called and a programme was prepared. It is not a new thing we are doing today or launching a new activity. In February or March this year a huge meeting was held in the Indira Gandhi Stadium (in Delhi). I had also attended that meeting where we came face to face with the weavers' problem. We had to listen to many bitter complaints and I listened to them. For, people in distress have to express their hardships and convey them to a responsible person. I myself sat there and heard their complaints after which we launched a programme which has created some confidence among the people.

After I had heard their tales of woe and told them of the steps we were going to take and when the steps were actually taken they began to realise that the problem was being tackled with some seriousness. Even so, this is not a task to be attended to in Delhi. This is your task and it is only but proper that you have been invited to this meeting. In March I had addressed ministers from the States

in charge of handloom development. In that discussion the point was made that many of the weavers live in the villages and there are sizeable funds for rural development programmes which should benefit the handloom people too. My discussions with the State ministers led to this resolve that the relief schemes for rural development must be applied to the weavers too. This again is not a new thing. The IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme) is not a new scheme, nor is the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. These are old schemes but now for the first time a large section of people who live in the rural areas and were not touched by these programmes of employment and relief are also to benefit by them. All the four rural development schemes have now been made applicable to the handloom weavers too. Not on paper, but in a manner in which the benefits would reach them. It is necessary to think about how implementation should be on the ground. The exchange of views in this connection has led to this meeting of top level people as a link of that process.

I do not wish to take more of your time. Whatever time you have, should be spent in considering straightaway how this should be implemented. This is not a formal meeting but you should examine what difficulties have been experienced in implementation and pinpoint the defects and mistakes of the past. You should reach decisions on the issues on which action has to be taken and that has to be done by you. We here, are making arrangements for providing you with funds, something is being done by NABARD also. While all that would be done, you have to ensure that the funds are properly spent. It has been our experience that there has been misuse of funds in handloom development schemes and this has to stop. I will not tolerate this any longer. In the present state of our financial resources, it is not easy to find funds. The handloom weavers are our own people and they should become partners in spending the money you have. State governments will have to shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that funds are not misused and there are no mistakes. Whatever we can do, you have to point out and in future too we shall do it. The Centre and the States have to work in close cooperation for which you have been called here.

Both you and we know what is the importance of this sector, its potential and the export potential. May I also say that whatever pressure we are subject to in the international sphere is because others are jealous. The quality and finesse of our handloom cloth is such that our goods sell like hot cakes. So the importing countries have imposed quotas on us. When we ask them to raise the quotas, they say, they would do it after ten years. This is how they go on haggling, but this is a separate issue.

We are, of course, active on this front and will extract as much as possible for our country. But if we produce anything sub-standard that will not be exported. This makes quality control and quality improvement relevant here because the quotas for our exports are not going to be as big as they were before or as big as you wish them to be. If you export the best products within the quotas we get, it would redound to your advantage. That would benefit the weavers and the country. Quality is the real thing and you must devote some thought to it. There is nothing much else to say because we are gathered here for the first time after this development programme was launched to find out what difficulties are experienced and how it has to be improved. This is what you have to tell us.

It is good that we call you here because the State governments are involved in everything, they are the agencies for implementation and the work gets done at their level.

It is, therefore, a welcome step that we keep on meeting. So consider this a summit conference and tell us what is to be done finally in this area and what improvement has to be carried out so that the programme can be fully implemented.

Economic Reforms to Continue

I AM GRATEFUL to you, Mr President, and all the other members of FICCI for inviting me to inaugurate the Sixty-Sixth annual session of the Federation. I am pleased to have this opportunity of meeting the country's leading industrialists once again. Almost every year the annual general meeting of FICCI provides us, in government, an opportunity to interact with representatives of industry and commerce. The exchange of views leads to a constructive interaction on the basis of which we are able to chalk out our course for the future. A closer understanding between industry and government has become an imperative of our development process and the reforms programme that we have embarked upon. I am confident that the outcome of this session will again help us to heighten commonality in our views on how to achieve our objective of taking the country on a path of sustainable rapid development.

For the past 27 months we have been engaged in a far-reaching programme of economic reforms and it is, indeed, appropriate that on this occasion we take stock of what has happened so far. You would recall that the strategy of economic reforms is based on a combination of stabilisation measures to tide over the economic crisis that we faced in 1991 and structural reforms which are designed to integrate our economy with the global economy and to impart dynamism in the overall growth process. Therefore, the reform package has consisted of measures of stabilisation which would have an impact in the short-run as well as measures of structural reforms which would give results in the medium and long-term.

In respect of the stabilisation measures, the main steps taken were strict monetary and fiscal discipline, a liberalised exchange rate policy, mobilisation of financing from multilateral and bilateral sources in order to resolve the pressures on the balance of payments

and to build up foreign exchange reserves. I hardly need to repeat here the short-term achievements in our effort at stabilisation. Mr President, you have in your speech already listed the current trends and have referred to the indicators which clearly establish the success of our stabilisation programme. I am happy that all sectors of the economy have responded so well to the new policies adopted by the Government. Our initial success justifies the new wave of confidence and enthusiasm that we witness in the country today.

As we now progress on the third year of our programme, it is time to recall that in the beginning generally, the relatively easier decisions are taken and, therefore, the reforms at the initial stages are easier to implement. The difficult part lies ahead. Without, in any way, dampening enthusiasm or eroding confidence, I must point out that we have a long way to go and our journey will be difficult and hard. We cannot be deterred or diverted from the chosen path which is to secure our rightful place in the world economy. Our initial success, therefore, should spur us to greater effort and harden our determination to move faster.

Mr President, you have said that the reform process has slowed down. I can assure you that the Government has never been more committed to the reforms than it is now, I am fully aware that we have no further time to lose in achieving our economic objectives. My recent visits to some Asian countries have convinced me even more that we are lagging behind and must, therefore, renew our efforts for rapid growth. However, there are many factors that need to be taken into account in determining the speed with which new reforms should be introduced. It is absolutely necessary that the pace of change should make a real impact on the system. At the same time, it is such that the system is able to absorb it without collapsing. There are some countries where the pace of change has proved to be too fast for the existing system and that has produced undesirable results. In our case, our system is still in the process of absorbing the reforms that we announced in 1991. The Central Government, the State governments and various institutions are adjusting to the changes. This process of absorption certainly needs to be accelerated, but it should not be jumped over.

This is the real point that whenever we review the progress of the reforms, we find that at some point there is an obstacle that comes across and we just don't know how all these obstacles are to be removed and how quickly they have to be removed. We have the State governments, we have the Central Government itself in which there are several breaking mechanisms. We have been grappling to remove these mechanisms and, when it comes to the State, the situation is still more difficult or still more incomplete. So, our first concentration should be to complete this task of consolidation. When you start a reform, it should go down to the lowest levels. Leaving it half-way and going in for the second one and the third one and the fourth one will leave everything unresolved because nothing is complete. Until something is complete, the next one will not have the impact that we want—what they call, '*Aagey doro, peeche chhoro.*' This kind of thing should not happen and, therefore, I am not saying that this is a sequence which takes years and years to complete; what I am saying is, simultaneously, you have to be working on several fronts. Government and every one concerned have to be working on several fronts. Some one has to be really hammering at what is happening at the State level, right down to the Collector's level, to the sarpanches' level, the Panchayats' level. Land, water, electricity all the inputs are in the States. We have only words, we have only policies to be written on paper. We write them, we discuss them, we come to some conclusions we think, all right, they may not be all right when applied to the local conditions. So, it needs a lot of interaction with the States. I have been struggling very hard to get the State governments, Chief Ministers, officers interested in this. I have succeeded to a large extent, but I cannot say that we have succeeded hundred per cent. So, that aspect has to be proceeded with, with the same vigour with which we started; perhaps even more vigorously because as we go along, as I said, the easier ones get completed first, the more difficult ones are relegated to some future date or, we try to get over them or, wish them away, which again gets us into trouble. Therefore, this consolidation is absolutely important and this cannot be under any circumstances ignored or neglected.

It is, therefore, necessary that in pursuing structural reforms we must ensure that the stabilisation programme does not suffer. While for structural change, it may be beneficial to liberalise credit and lower interest rates, it is obvious that beyond a point such policies would again push up inflation. Therefore, a careful calibration between the structural reforms process and the stabilisation programme has to be maintained. Another important factor is that while the reforms are in progress, social returns must not be out of alignment. While the transition period, admittedly, creates strains, the adverse impacts have to be carefully balanced.

The adverse effects of the reallocation of resources between sectors of the economy must be kept to the minimum. The effort is to initiate simultaneous action so that the reforms may be cemented on the basis of widespread public support and a certain amount of social welfare built into it so that it becomes acceptable to the vast masses of people in this country. If at that level people have no enthusiasm for it, even if they may not expressly reject it, our headway is going to be very slow and very doubtful. Therefore, we have to be again thinking of giving simultaneous benefit to those who cannot wait for ten years or fifteen years until the trickle-down effect takes benefit to them. That is why we have taken up what is called the 'Bypass Model'. While we are opening up at the top, we are also siphoning funds to the lower levels, the lowest levels. You know how it is done. The rural development programme has been stepped up several times with the result that there is an ample scope to benefit the people at the grass roots level. This is purely from Government funds. No one is going to run our schools for us, primary schools for us. No one from any other country will come and run our primary health centres for us. No one is going to run our welfare programmes for us. That is for this Government, for the people of this country themselves to run. Yes, people will come and start industries. That is possible and we are trying for that. So, there is a division. There are areas in which the Government alone, and the people alone have to take care of all that is to be done while there is another area, vast area, where foreign investment, foreign capital coming and foreign participation is possible.

So, we should understand very carefully where we have to take the responsibility and where the responsibility hitherto taken by us can be shared with others. In order to do this, sometimes caution and prudence have to be exercised in reallocating the limited resources that are available. In any case, it is not possible nor is it necessary for any government, that in pursuing reforms, to announce substantial packages of policy measures every now and then merely to prove that the momentum of reforms has not slowed down. It is necessary that the policy changes announced in our case must be consolidated before further steps are taken. Stated in simple form, the reform programme has to be self-sustainable. The pace of the reforms has, therefore, to be carefully modulated on the basis of inputs of performance in all sectors of the economy. It is these inputs of performance that need a relentless effort at improvement.

Having said this, I would once again like to repeat that the Government is not just watching or being complacent. On the other hand, preparations are being made with care and deliberation on the measures that will need to be taken in the identified area where reforms will require to be announced in future. Preparations are in hand for changes in various laws like the Companies Act, FERA, etc. The reform of the financial sector similarly is being implemented progressively. Reforms in the capital market are also being undertaken. Changes in policies and procedures in the trade and industry sectors are being finalised on the basis of various inputs received from individuals and organisations. At the request of countries, such as USA, Germany and UK, we intend to sign 'Bilateral Investment Treaties' to show our firm commitment and assurance to foreign investors. I think we agreed to do this with South Korea also. I myself did it when I went there. Further liberalisation in the conditions for automatic approvals for foreign financial and technical collaborations is also planned. Policies are under formulation to provide facilitation measures for exporters with proven track records; policies are also to be adopted to promote agricultural exports in areas where surpluses are available. Now, this is one area which has proved to be an unexpected boon to India.

Within the last one year or a little more, we have really discovered something like a gold mine. We had never expected that some time back a country which was really struggling for its next meal would become an exporter-country in food, in agricultural produce, so soon and so remarkably. It is a miracle which the Indian farmer and, particularly the progressive farmer, has brought about. I have gone into some details and I find that this scope is almost limitless. I am sure, Balramji will be able to tell you more about it. But the Agricultural Policy that we have adopted, really, gives a lot of hope and encouragement to all of us. As you know, if you really have another success story in agriculture by way of exports, that will be the pathfinder, pathbreaker for all other activity in this country in the industrial field. They go hand in hand but at the same time what one is used to for centuries is a little easier done, and that is what is happening in agriculture.

In industry, naturally one has to have a training, one has to work, may be things are not very clear to a new entrant, but all that have to be done and both sectors have to be taken care of. That is why I thought this is the time, when the importance of agriculture has to be taken into account. I am sure, if you go a little deeper into the matter, you will all start taking interest and I am quite amazed that before our own businessmen have shown any interest, businessmen abroad, have really taken the initiative. They are, I think, ahead of all of you in recognising the importance of agriculture, particularly agricultural products, the value added products, exports and things like that. So, I hope, it will be possible for you to catch up with at least your counterparts from outside the Indian shores. On the fiscal side, further rationalisation of taxes will be undertaken including the possibility of moving to a VAT system.

It is relevant in this context that the industrial sector which will function as the engine of rapid growth shows good results. In our case, so far the performance of the industrial sector is rather short of expectation. It is true that at the time of announcement of reforms, there was a negative growth. From there, now we are close to 4 per cent growth. Thus, the trend is positive. However,

investment is to pick up faster. Even though the number of IEMs (Industrial Entrepreneurs Memoranda) filed in the 12-month period, August 1992 to July 1993, is just a little under 4,000, it is only 66 per cent of the number filed in the previous 12 months. Recession in the global economy, as also in many sectors in India, may be one reason for the low level of investment in industry; but with improvement in the general investment climate, I hope there will be substantial improvement in this respect. This is one area where those of you present here can perhaps make a direct contribution. As I have already pointed out, the trends of export have shown a very healthy recovery. For the first four months of this year, the growth of around 27 per cent in dollar terms is most satisfactory. The performance of the agriculture sector is perhaps the brightest part of our economic scenario as I have just told you. As a result, our foodgrains stocks have risen to 25 million tonnes in July 1993 as compared to 19.3 million tonnes in July 1991. The excellent performance of the agriculture sector has given strength to the reforms programme. To a large extent, our ability to control inflation can be ascribed to the good performance of this sector. It is essential that these encouraging trends must continue in the coming years.

As all of you are, no doubt, aware one major policy change announced in July 1991 was to allow direct foreign investment. The underlying reasons were not only to secure additional resources, but also to achieve a general upgradation of technology in the industrial sector. Since this was the first time that such a step was taken after independence, naturally misgivings and fears of many kinds were expressed. I was very closely cross-examined in many countries and I had to make use of my resourcefulness and tell them that I have not come here as a false salesman, and this required quite a bit of convincing. I was confident that our entrepreneurs were capable of dealing with this liberalisation. The quantum of foreign capital proposals received and approved by Government has now reached 3.5 billion dollars. Even though the actual inflow of investment is around 700 million dollars, I would consider the results of our policy change as being on the whole satisfactory. I

am particularly pleased with two features of foreign investment. Firstly, 87.3 per cent of the investment is proposed to be made in priority sectors. This is important because when you are embarking on a massive programme of industrialisation, what is equally important, and perhaps most urgent to be achieved, is infrastructure.

If you don't have the infrastructure, there is no point in your aspiring to industrialise. It is a good thing that we are likely to get the gas from other countries—Iran and Oman. The Oman thing is actually proceeding. The Iran project also is being taken up quite seriously. There will be some difficulties of how to take it, whether it is under the sea or over land or whatever. But those things we can certainly solve. The point is that in a very big way you are able to get energy and then the programme of industrialisation will become much easier, much more hopeful, much more prospective than what it looks today. I think the concerned Minister from Oman is coming in the next few days and they are very enthusiastic that it has been found feasible after the first studies to get it under the sea and he is going to explain us how they have managed it or they are going to manage it. Secondly, even the globally known multinationals have joined hands with Indian parties and, therefore, foreign investment, by and large, is coming in joint ventures.

This is a very healthy development as not only does it prove the point that the Indian entrepreneurs have come of age, but it also shows that our intention to use foreign investment for upgradation of technology of Indian industry is also likely to materialise. Sometimes it is said that projects with foreign investment are unduly slow in implementation. My information does not bear this out completely. In the mega projects, particularly in capital intensive areas, the gestation period all over the world is fairly long. In the case of proposals we have received, there is hardly any case where the gestation period has gone beyond global norms so far. There can be no doubt that we would have been happier if implementation had been quicker, but considering that foreign investment has been allowed in the country for the first time, it is to be

expected that initial progress will be slightly slow. I am confident that if the current improvement in our economic condition continues, inflow of foreign investment will come up to our expectation.

Development experience internationally has taught us that no reform process will succeed unless we can ensure that all major participants cooperate and benefit from it. This has lessons both for Government as well as for industry. Successful entrepreneurs are invariably those, who have looked after employees' interests and obtained complete cooperation from them as a result. I think, it is wrong to assume an adversarial relationship between labour and industry. While laws cannot be absolutely static, we have to see to it that interests of labour are fully safeguarded.

I have all along maintained that there is a definite role of PSUs. Their contribution to growth in the new regime cannot be questioned. What needs to be done is to improve consistently their efficiency and competitiveness. The liberalised system will allow the efficient PSUs to expand and diversify more easily. For those that are not doing well, as I have announced earlier also, Government would support the ones that can be turned around. In this context, the legitimate concerns of the labour will be addressed. Government has a flexible approach and would even be willing to hand over management of such units to workers cooperatives if thereby they would become viable.

Mr President, I am happy that you have in your speech focussed on quality of life and suggested that it must be on our new agenda. I am convinced that economic reforms must have a human face and unless the reform programme ensures improvement in the quality of life of the weakest sections of society, the programme cannot be said to be balanced. We intend, therefore, to concentrate more on progress in the social sectors. We have increased allocations for programmes like the JRY and have also launched three new schemes to which, Mr President, you have referred in your speech. I would add my own appeal to yours to the business community to extend its wholehearted support to all Government

programmes in the social sector. The economy must grow in its entirety and there cannot be pockets of affluence along with extensive poverty. I would like to end, therefore, by declaring once again that the reform programme of the Government shall continue with all the vigour and strength at Government's command until our objectives of economic growth and development are achieved.

Achieving Faster Rate of Growth in Coal Industry

I AM, INDEED, happy to be here today in participating in a function organised by the Coal Industry, commemorating the 20th year of nationalisation of Coal Industry and appreciating the good work done by the coal mine workers.

The Coal Industry during the pre-nationalisation period had many drawbacks and since nationalisation quite a few of them have been overcome. Dependence of Coal India Limited on budgetary support has reduced and their self-reliance to secure investible funds through internal generation has been manifested as the Minister has just given some figures to illustrate this. The profits achieved during last two years also reflect not only attitudinal change but also indicate high degree of professionalism in dealing with various issues connected with the Industry. Dependence of national economy on coal will continue till the foreseeable future considering our limited reserves of hydro-carbon, difficulties in developing Hydel and Nuclear Power and other non-conventional sources of energy. Fortunately, even at the accelerated rate of consumption, no reserves of coal in India will last for at least

another 150 years. The technology for exploitation of coal has also been acquired and assimilated, providing opportunities for faster growth to meet the increasing demands of energy. Per capita consumption of energy is considered amongst others, important index to assess the status of development as well as the measure of quality of the life of the people. Despite the impressive figures of production of coal in the country and its ranking in terms of coal reserves or in terms of coal production in the world, the per capita availability and consumption of coal is still low. It is not your fault. The population is increasing so fast and whatever you do, the per capita goes down.

Developed countries which were earlier producing higher quantities of coal, have now reduced their production for various reasons, whereas others like China have increased the production of coal. Since coal meets, more than 70 per cent of the energy needs of the country and Coal India produces nearly 90 per cent of the coal in the country, a special responsibility rests with Coal India to achieve faster rate of growth most economically. This calls for optimum utilisation of the capacities already built up during the past 20 years both in respect of manpower and machines, as well as other infrastructure. In terms of capacity utilisation, Coal India should strive to achieve international standards, as reflected in the output, both in open cast as well as in underground mines. This will provide sufficient surpluses for Coal India to be completely free from budgetary support and allow sufficient investible funds to accelerate the current growth rate.

Nearly 70 per cent of the coal production today in India is coming from open cast mines. In the pre-nationalisation days, underground mines contributed major share of coal production. Perhaps, there were adequate reasons to put greater emphasis on open cast mines to meet the emergent demands at the shortest possible time. However, time has come when Coal Industry should seriously consider, giving due importance and thrust for the development of underground mines considering the environmental related issues, problems associated with land availability and the need

for developing better quality of coal at the deeper horizons. In advanced countries, coal has been exploited in underground mines at the depth of 800 to 900 meters, whereas in India, we have not been able to touch coal of good quality at such depths. Herein lies a new challenge for the Coal Industry, which they should accept.

The basic purpose of any industry is essentially to achieve the consumer satisfaction. Quantitative production figures are no doubt impressive, but unless consumer satisfaction is achieved fully, much of the achievements would not really satisfy the customer, for whom the industry basically endeavours. In this area, Coal India has to put up much greater thrust so that the quality standards expected by our steel plants, thermal power stations and host of other industries, as well as by the domestic consumers are fulfilled. This is achievable only through sustained, conscious and dedicated efforts of all concerned starting from the mine workers upto the personnel engaged in the delivery of coal. With the improvement in quality of coal, the entire economy will stand to gain and Coal India also will be an indirect beneficiary of its own efforts apart from achieving higher sales realisations, gaining better margins.

No doubt, Coal India has improved the quality of the life of the mine workers and its employees during the last 20 years, it has, undoubtedly, sensitised this workforce to new concepts of welfare, safety and management practices to an extent that reversal of this social trend and return to the evil practices prevailing in the pre-nationalised period have become impossible. However, other people living in the coal-mines areas often suffer from the effects of mining, because of environmental problems, large scale mining activities often lead to. It is essential for the Coal Industry to ensure that the quality of life of people living in mining areas is not only maintained as it existed at the beginning of any project, but is improved decidedly for the better. The manifestation of this resolve has to be in terms of health, education, infrastructure, like roads, electricity supply, and in overall improvement. Without the support and cooperation of the people living in the mining areas, no

project can really reach its meaningful goal and sustain its development and production. This cooperation has to be developed through much closer integration and association with due concern for the well being of the people living in the mining areas. If they are denied the fruits of development taking place in their area, such development cannot be permanent or long lasting. Economy, economic development has to proceed with regard to the social justice and public welfare also.

The Coal Industry has to discharge its full responsibility for maintenance, restoration and improvement of the environment. The project management in Coal India has to be made more meaningful and should be professionalised. Instances have come to notice where important projects of the industry have been badly delayed leading to time and cost over-run. We cannot afford such delays, if you mean to improve the performance of the industry faster and further. In the project management, continuity of persons responsible to implement the projects and due accountability to complete the projects within time and cost, require well deserved attention. I am confident that Coal Industry will ensure institutionalised arrangements for its successful solution of these key issues. For the past 20 years Coal Industry has remained in the nationalised sector and has operated benefit of any competition. With the amendment in Coal Mines Nationalisation Act, new coal mines captive to thermal power stations or steel plants are to be allowed. Coal is also allowed to be imported now. These changes bring into sharp focus, the element of competition which the industry has to face from now on. This competition, I do hope, will encourage Coal India to become more efficient and competitive not only within India but also globally so that in the near future it can emerge as a leading exporter of coal from our country in the world.

Indian Industry to Redefine Its Goal

I DEEM IT a great privilege to inaugurate the India International Trade Fair on the day our nation is paying homage to our visionary leader, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on his birth anniversary. Pandit Nehru symbolised the aspirations of resurgent India to discard the dark legacies of colonial rule to move rapidly into the light and dynamism of a new world. Within his lifetime he helped India realise much of this dream and was instrumental in laying the foundation of the diversified industrial base, India today possesses and whose results can be seen around us in this exhibition.

Panditji's philosophy and methodology in the nation's early formative years proved extremely helpful in developing enterprise, infrastructure and human resources. As a result, India now possesses one of the largest pools of highly skilled manpower anywhere in the world. The emphasis on planning in our development process was a requirement of the time, and it yielded results on several fronts. In course of time, in a natural process, enterprise that we had nurtured in our many public and private sector industries gathered a climate of controls and restrictive regimes. It was time that the creative entrepreneurial energy be unleashed. Our reforms have been a landmark in the process of this change. The benefits of the release of the entrepreneurial energies is already apparent. Foreign trade has started growing rapidly in response to the incentives now offered. However, we still have a long way to go. Greater economic interaction is crucial if we are to modernise our industry and expand our trade further in the coming years.

In a world of increasing interdependence, it is only right that India has come to lay emphasis on liberalisation and encouragement to entrepreneurship. It is heartening to note that our entrepreneurs

have welcomed these measures and we expect them to reap considerable benefits from the globalisation process and the promises that a free trade environment implies. As we open up to the outside world, however, we do so on the promise of reciprocity and not on dictate. Trade is a two-way street and we cannot afford to open our own markets if we find our access to foreign markets restricted. Prosperity like peace is indivisible and a higher level of trade is vital for the well-being of the world economy. We in India recognise the benefits that a system of free and equal trade can bring about. While we will put our weight behind the current process of negotiations to see that it produces a free and equitable world economic order, the millions of our countrymen will have to be satisfied and convinced first that the gains promised to all countries are not usurped by a few.

The India International Trade Fair brings together a large number of industrial, scientific and technological enterprises from different countries to interact with the best in ours. This mingling of commerce and cultures tends to catalyse the process of globalisation. In the evolving world economic scenario, foreign trade has become a crucial factor for growth and development. With the complexities of modern trade and economic relations between countries increasing day by day, however, factors such as relative efficiency in foreign trade are beginning to play as important a role as traditional factors such as comparative advantage and natural resource endowment, in determining success in international trade. Advanced information inputs, better marketing strategies, sophisticated communication techniques are crucial today. Exhibitions such as this help improve interaction in this crucial area, and I hope that the many participants who have gathered here from different countries will succeed in finding mutually beneficial and lasting relationship with our industries and entrepreneurs, as we do with theirs.

Rapid export growth has become a national objective. The foreign trade sector in India is a vital part of our economic growth process. In this context, the efforts by IITF to present the scientific

and technological advancements in India and other parts of the world provide a special forum for meaningful trade exchanges and sharing of technical expertise. The small and medium enterprises sector is receiving considerable attention globally. In India, this sector is the mainspring of economic activity and exports. I am confident that this vital sector would find many valuable opportunities at 'TECHMART-93' which is a part of this exhibition, to upgrade its technology and competitiveness. Success in economic performance would surely be in our grasp if exposure, opportunities and support are extended to this sector.

I believe there is a consensus on the role of import of technology in modernising our industry. This could come in many ways, which are not mutually contradictory, but could all operate side by side in a mutually reinforcing manner. I want technology to come into India with the necessary capital investment, whether indigenous or non-indigenous. I have no discrimination, at the same time, no taboo. India needs massive investments, at the earliest particularly in infrastructural sectors like power, transport and communications. Thus, the indispensable capital-technology combination is what is needed in this country and if in a determined bid to find these, I look for them all round, I am sure I am doing what is right for the country. In the process, I shall be putting to work the huge pool of skilled work force and managerial talent available, to accelerate the economic transformation of our country.

Indian enterprise has accepted business challenges in overseas locations and proved its resilience and competitiveness. Import liberalisation with adequate anti-dumping safeguards also enhances competitiveness and serves to strengthen the production base. Hence, with the opening of our economy, we are striving to achieve the twin objective of accelerating the growth process while simultaneously building bridges of technical and economic cooperation with other countries. It is this spirit which 'TECHMART-93' seeks to foster.

We are working now on an exciting national agenda for building a new India which is economically strong, technologically advanced and socially a cohesive and integrated society. In this major national effort, governments and industry must act in a spirit of true partnership. At the same time, we must ensure that poverty elimination and rural development are achieved in ample measure. This is our vision. To achieve this, I would request Indian industry also to redefine its goals and orient itself to a new environment of promotion of efficiency, technological upgradation, regard for quality, export promotion and protection of the environment—and most important, social welfare.

Government's Cooperation to People's Programme

I AM HAPPY to be here today on varied programmes, part of it is connected intimately with our cultural heritage, the 'Maha Mastakabisheka of Bahubali.' I have gone there. One feels that this is a new world, a world which gives us colours, a new inspiration of sacrifice and peace. This world represents India. This is the world which India has radiated on all sides and this is the world by which India has been moulded for centuries and I am happy that on this occasion Lord Bahubali gave me the opportunity to come to his feet and participate in the function.

The function is right here at the grass roots level, face to face with the people, face to face with the citizens of this beautiful city.

The beauty of a city, in part, consists of buildings, streets, roads and whatever man made embellishments are there, but there is another part of the beauty of a city or a village or a country which perhaps, we do not realise always but which is much more important and that is the prosperity of the people and the beauty, which resides in the prosperity of the people, in the face of a person who has enough to eat. That beauty radiates all over the country and that is what we have to really take care of and we are taking care to the extent we can.

I hope and pray, I wish earnestly that the smile of a satisfied man or woman or child should become the symbol of a prosperous India. But this is possible only when we are completely able to concentrate on development starting from the village, the grass roots and going up to the highest level.

We have nothing else to disturb our concentration on this programme. But I am sorry to say that for several years we have been disturbed in this one point programme of banishing poverty, disease, ignorance from this land and every time we come back to it, something or the other happens. There are some forces in this country and perhaps abroad, which disturb this concentration. I would say that this concentration is the most important, the highest priority which we have to give in today's circumstances and this is what I have been saying wherever I go, whomsoever I meet.

This is a huge country of continental proportions and the problems of this country have always been massive and complicated. We have had to be content with these complications from time to time. But what concentration was there during the freedom struggle! Unless we continue it today, with the same relentlessness, with the same one point concentration, there is no possibility of solving all these problems. Because the problems are being solved on one side and on the other side new problems are coming up. So, I would very respectfully repeat what I have been saying for the last two and half years that what India needs today, is peace, harmony and development. These are the three prerequisites of a

nation and this nation can become great only when we are able to have three of these as our first priority.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave us the great message of planning and we have made tremendous strides through our Five Year Plans. Indira Gandhi gave us the great concentration on alleviating poverty, a programme which will never end in this country. It will have to be continued relentlessly for a very long long time and only then we will be able to see the end of the programme. And even then perhaps, much will remain to be done. Rajiv Gandhi gave us a very systematic approach to poverty alleviation by taking it to the grass roots level and making arrangements to see that the grass roots level also becomes answerable and responsible to this programme. Now, we have to see that this programme gets down to the grass roots level not only on paper, but whether it has been done. The question of monitoring, verification, taking corrective steps wherever things go wrong, has become the greatest necessity of the country and of the Government today.

While I was coming here, I was asked to distribute envelopes with money. I did it. But something was missing, some question mark was coming up in my mind. Who is to see that this money is well spent? This is the poor man's money going again to the poor man or woman. We cannot afford to waste money like other countries. We have to see that every single rupee which reaches a poor deserving person in this country is well spent. I wanted to know from the Chief Minister, I still want to know from him, what is the mechanism by which this is ensured. Who goes and finds out after 3 months or 6 months, what has happened to one thousand or two thousand rupees, given to a family? This is, what is extremely important today. And we have to become accountable for it. If you do not do this, money will be wasted and nothing will happen to the poor people. So this is the aspect, which we have to concentrate on today. These are very small things, simple things, everybody knows about them. But when it comes to the government, the buck is passed, but finally no one takes the responsibility. I want every programme in this country to be in the hands of people, who are

answerable for the implementation of the programme. That is the most important factor in our developmental programmes today and I want everyone, the Chief Minister, the ministers, officers and the people to understand this. It is very easy to spend one thousand or two thousand rupees. It does not take more than two hours to spend. But the point is, this money is not meant for being spent like that. This money is meant for the sustenance of a family for all time, this money is meant for a young man or a woman to make use in such a way that he or she becomes a unit of production, a unit of prosperity, in this country. Because the prosperity of the country is the aggregate of all these small units. Wherever it goes wrong, the whole thing can go wrong. Therefore, this is the first opportunity that I am getting to tell you, that this country cannot afford waste and therefore the answerability will link up the help given to the poor with the future of the poor, with the programmes of the poor and also how the programmes are being formed from time to time. This is the programme, this is the first priority programme that we have to place in front of us.

I have announced three important programmes recently apart from most of the programmes that we already have, like the IRDP, and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana which Rajiv Gandhi gave us. First programme is about the women of this country, our sisters. I find that a lot of them are here. I want to ask them, can they say that they have a post office savings account in their own name; anywhere in their locality. I would like more of them to open accounts and I tell you, why have I really chosen this programme, you should understand.

In our own ancient law, even own law as it operates today, there is what is called a *Stree Dhana* over which the husband has no right according to law. Now this is not the law of today. This was probably promulgated by Manu or Yagnavalkya, may be thousands of years ago but over the centuries, what has happened to the women of this country is that they have lost their independence particularly their autonomy, they have lost their status. This is well known and unless the status of women who constitute 50 per cent

of the population is restored, real progress in this country is not possible, and therefore, I have started it in a very small way. Because, we cannot afford more than that. Even for this programme, the Central Government is to spend about one thousand crore of rupees every year. The programme is that every adult woman in this country opens a savings account, either in the post office or in a bank, saves three hundred rupees a year, at the end of the year. The Central Government gives her seventy five rupees, so that, at the end of the year, she has three hundred and seventy five rupees.

I want my sisters to make me spend all the one thousand crore without saving anything. This is a challenge to them. This is an invitation to them and I hope they will accept it. This, I want to do as a *Prayashchitta* for hundreds of years during which women have been suppressed in this country and I want that this programme should be the harbinger of a new consciousness among the women of this country.

The second programme is about urban youth. This is not a new programme, a programme of this kind was announced and implemented when Indiraji was our Prime Minister. But in course of time, I do not know what happened. Now, we have to take it up again, because unless we are able to give some employment to our young men and women, the country will remain where it is and perhaps it will run into unnecessary complications of social and economic nature. So, I want that any young man or woman, or two of them, if they want to start something like a business, a small industry, a small shop and these are the things that are generally possible in the towns and I am not asking you to go for big industries that will take hundreds or thousands of crores, these small units whether it is a cycle shop, a repair shop, a small way-side hotel somewhere or something which gives some relief, some service to the people of some kind, it does not matter, even if it is a shoe-shine shop, one lakh of rupees will be made available and again this has to be sustained systematic programme, where money is not wasted, but properly utilised and the person is in a position to improve his lot from year to year. One lakh is not really a very

large sum, but at the same time, it is not a very small sum either. Therefore, it gives him the opportunity to improve himself, go up and up in life and perhaps become a useful citizen, a useful productive citizen of the country and this is the idea which has prompted this programme to be started again.

The third programme is about the rural areas. We know most of us come from the villages, the main occupation there is agriculture, but agriculture does not give employment to the people all the year round. It has been calculated that at least for about a hundred days in a year out of 365, the employment available in agriculture is of a very limited nature and therefore they are almost unemployed. For these 100 days, we will have to think of some programme in the developmental aspects of the village or in the neighbourhood where these people can be employed. This programme has been very successfully tried in Maharashtra. It is called the Employment Guarantee Scheme. We are not calling it the Employment Guarantee Scheme. We are only calling it Assured Employment Scheme, and we will try to implement it in such a way that people will not have to leave their homes and go to the towns where there is no employment and create problems. The idea is that we have some developmental programmes started in the neighbourhood or in the same village, so that, for hundred days at least in the year, there is something for them to do and they can earn their livelihood.

These programmes are not meant only to be on paper, I would like to assure you that I would not take the next step unless I am absolutely certain that this Scheme has been properly worked out. It is going to be implemented honestly and without any delay if we can help it and only then the programmes will go on. I also assure you that at the Government of India level, in the Ministry of Rural Development, meticulous schemes are being prepared right now. I am monitoring them. I am checking them myself and we know something about the villages we come from, so it is not a new thing for me and only the programmes well tested, well examined, well made, well conceived, will come. I want State governments,

I want to request all the State Chief Ministers in this country to become the real builders of these programmes, because I can only prepare programmes in Delhi. I cannot implement them, the implementing agency has to be the State government and this is where the Centre and the States can come together for the good of the people instead of always talking and giving statements against each other. This is one of the programmes, that we have conceived off, where there is no need for any discrimination, there is no need for any confrontation, there is no party at all, involved in this. People are people; and whatever you are giving to the people whether it is a Congress government, or a Communist government or a BJP government, it does not matter at all.

Today the point is to concentrate on development. Today is the time to concentrate on progress. Today is the time to brush aside all differences, all other cobwebs that may be there in our minds from time to time and concentrate on this single point programme of development for which this country needs attention, needs this concentration. I can only hope that the people of Karnataka whatever they maybe, whatever other complications there maybe, will concentrate on development, cooperate with the government. In fact, it is your programme in which the Government has to cooperate. We have been saying that people should cooperate with the government. I would put it the other way round. It is the people's programme in which the government has to cooperate, whether it is Central Government, or the State government and see that this programme is pushed through relentlessly without any hindrances, any disturbance, without anyone coming in the way of the smooth conduct of these programmes.

Next time, when I come here, I would like to know what has happened, what these boys and girls, to whom I have given these envelopes just now, are doing. I want to know from them, I want to see them, I want to greet them, I want them to show their smiling faces, if they have done well, that is how I want to keep in touch with these programmes. I would like to spend some time on this monitoring aspect which is absolutely important from my point of

view, because we have, as I said, no money to be wasted in this country. Every paisa has to be spent properly and meaningfully. With these words, I thank you once again for having been very patient with me. I have placed before you what is considered to be the most important programme, a most important agenda of the nation and to this agenda, we have to come back and concentrate upon it, so that, India really gets going as a great nation and achieves its goals, objectives and its place in the world, in the comity of nations and we are again proud of this country as we have always been.

Local Area Development Scheme

VERY OFTEN IT appears that the Members of Parliament are approached by their constituents for small works of a capital nature to be done in their constituencies. However, they are not in a position to ensure that the work suggested by them is undertaken. Hence, there was a demand made by Members of Parliament of different political parties, in fact, of all political parties including independents that they should be allowed to recommend to the District Collector, works to be done in their constituencies. The Government of India considered the above suggestions and has decided to introduce a new scheme to be called "MP's Local Area Development Scheme." Under this, each Member of Parliament will have the freedom to suggest to the District Collector, works to be done, not exceeding Rs. one crore per year within his or her constituency. Members of Parliament of Rajya Sabha will nominate one district where the work will be undertaken in the State from which he or she has been elected.

The funds will be released to the District Collectors directly by the Ministry of Rural Development, who will operate the Scheme. The works will be executed through government agencies

Announcement in Lok Sabha regarding the Schemes of Small Works Programme in the constituencies of Members of Parliament, New Delhi, 23 December 1993

by the District Collectors after consultation with Members of Parliament. Naturally, the handling of funds, giving of contracts, disbursing money will be done by the District Collector as per the procedure that he/she is already following. The types of works allowed will be such as to lead to the creation of durable assets. Under no circumstance, shall any revenue expenditure be undertaken under this Scheme. Each individual work shall not exceed Rs. 10 lakh.

The Scheme is for developmental works of small nature based on locally felt needs. The work that may be undertaken at the instance of a Member of Parliament may fall in one of the following categories with a ceiling of Rs. 10 lakh for each project. The list of work is only illustrative, other things could be added to it in suitable cases:

- (a) Constructing school buildings.
- (b) Providing drinking water to the people in the villages, towns or cities by sinking tubewells or doing something else which may help in this respect.
- (c) Constructing the village roads or approach roads.
- (d) Constructing bridges on the approach roads.
- (e) Constructing common shelter for the aged or the handicapped.
- (f) Constructing buildings for the Gram Panchayat, hospitals or for cultural and sports activities.
- (g) Afforestation in the government and community land and social forestry for providing employment in lean period.
- (h) Desilting and digging of village ponds.
- (i) Constructing the irrigation canals to avoid the loss of water and also to provide employment to the people.
- (j) Constructing common gohar-gas plants or carrying on some activities relating to it.
- (k) Construction of small irrigation bandhs or lift irrigation schemes or water table recharging schemes.
- (l) Public reading rooms or study rooms.

- (m) Creches.
- (n) Construction of primary health centres or post-mortem rooms.
- (o) Crematoriums.
- (p) Construction of public toilets and bathrooms.
- (q) Drainage and gutters.
- (r) Footpaths and pathways.
- (s) Provision of electricity, water, pathways in slum areas of cities, towns and in villages.
- (t) Construction of house galleys between old buildings in the cities, towns and villages.
- (u) Construction of Ashramshalas in tribal areas.
- (v) Construction of bus sheds/stops for public transport passengers.
- (w) Construction of mobile toilets for local bodies useful at fairs, public meetings and sport meets.
- (x) Any other items specified by the Union Government from time to time.

As I said, this is only an illustrative list. There are many other facilities one could think of.

The detailed guidelines for the Scheme will be issued by the Ministry of Rural Development in due course.

While the Scheme will start in the current year, given that some time will be required for preparatory work, it may not be possible to implement it before the beginning of February 1994. Hence a token provision of Rs. 5 lakh per M.P. is being proposed in the current year, but from 1994-95 the full provision will be made.

Dunkel Proposals to India's Advantage

I HAVE COME over here to tell a few words to you. It is my duty not only to know the difficulties but also to reveal my difficulties, the problems of the Government and the problems of the country. 40,45 years have passed since we got independence. Now our country, our nation has been considered as a civilized nation. We have got nationalism, patriotism and faith in democracy. There is a strong feeling among all other countries that democracy in our country is more matured than many of the countries.

Today, I am appealing to you all, what is the problem before us? Except development, I don't think that there is any other problem from Kanyakumari to the Himalayas. The other problems can be solved. There are ways to solve these problems. But coming to development, we don't have money. The population is increasing. So we need industries'. Development is essential in all ways. We need all programmes. These are required in villages as well as in towns and big cities. These are required everywhere. Development is required for our country to save it from disintegration. There is no other way to unite the country except development. I feel happy that just now Shri Vijayabhaskara Reddy mentioned about the ongoing schemes at this place. I hope that you are also aware of these schemes. You know more than I. These programmes are being implemented in all States. I toured each and every State. Nobody mentioned anything except development. As such I request you today that we have to concentrate more on it.

Just now I came to know that some persons who have obstructed my arrival here are agitating against Dunkel proposals. I spoke for umpteen hours on Dunkel proposals with the people and farmers. I explained the proposals to all. Today also I am asking

you, if there is any disadvantage in Dunkel proposals, please convince me. I am ready to listen to you. I will tell you, simply listen to me. I request you all that we don't have any disadvantage in Dunkel proposals. But we will gain out of it in certain respects. In this context, I quote two examples. At present we are getting the required yield from the crops. I feel happy. What happened during this year, heavy floods flooded the Punjab State. I visited that State. We get maximum yield from Punjab and Haryana. Next place goes to Andhra Pradesh. You are aware of this fact. If floods and famine occur in these two States and the crops fail, what should we do in such a situation? We need foodgrains to feed the 90 crore population of our country. From where can we get these foodgrains? If the farmers raise the crops, then only we get them. If the yield is reduced during a particular period due to some reasons, which are not in our hands or due to unkindness of nature, we have to get foodgrains from outside. We imported foodgrains in the past. We can't avoid it in future also. There is a rumour that whether you like it or not, whether you need it or not, you have to import the foodgrains and as a result the farmers will undergo a loss. I read the text of Dunkel proposals. I don't know where is the reference that it applies to India? I spoke to all. I spoke to the gentleman who is presently working on it, in place of the original writer, when he visited Delhi. I raised the question, "Sir, our farmers and representatives of farmers feel that we have to import foodgrains, invariably. Is it true?" Then he replied in the presence of journalists that it was not applicable to India. I don't understand why should we say no, when more than 160 countries in the world on one side agree to these proposals. Why should we object these proposals, when there is no disadvantage and we are going to gain something? If there is disadvantage, I am prepared even to say that also. This is the first aspect. The second aspect is, the farmers cannot store the seeds, required for them. They have to purchase these from somewhere, every year. The farmers can follow their old methods which they are practising every year or since a long period. There is no difficulty in it. Nobody will object them.

We have to observe one more important aspect. The development, which is taking place in our country at present

pertains to future. All of you should understand this, particularly the youth have to understand this. We used to export raw material only. The Britishers used to get raw material from us and manufacture the goods in their country by using the raw material in their industries. This was made value added and they used to sell their goods 10 or 20 times more of its value. Even the fixation of raw material price was in their hands. The Britishers exploited us like that. They used to get the raw material at a lower price. In such case what the farmer or the labourer who used to get the material from the mines, had to do? He had to accept the price offered by the British people. There was no other alternative. The same condition continued by them for 150 years. They exploited the country. At present our country is independent. Shall we send raw material? We do not want to send raw material. I already told that iron comes from iron ore. Good iron ore is being taken by the foreign countries. We made agreement with them. The contracts are continuing. Recently, I came to know that this good iron ore will not last for a long time. If the same trend continues, it will get exhausted within 50, 60 or 70 years. This is not justifiable. Hence we will fulfil the past contracts. After the completion of the contract period even one tola of iron ore should not leave the country. I passed the orders in this regard. If you want so, you start industries here. Start more steel industries. If technology is needed, get it from outside. But you should not send the raw material outside. I passed prohibitive orders in this regard. Why did I pass the orders? With a longer perspective, I did this. So what should the youth do tomorrow? Don't they possess intelligence? The youngsters who hailed from here are working excellently in foreign countries. As they possess money, laboratory, equipment, facilities, opportunity for employment etc., in those countries, our people are working there. In future if we are ready to provide employment and our people are ready to accept and if there will not be any raw material, what will you do? So, we have to take a decision, that in our country either at present or in future we have to develop the machinery or goods on par with foreign countries through research. We are doing this, we have to do this. We have to move forward with this decision.

We got good name regarding computer software. Our country got fame for so many aspects. This is not a mere raw material exporting country. This is an economic giant. Our country, from the point of view of economic perspective, has got very good opportunity to develop. Our scientists showed a small instrument today morning. You know that there is fluorine in the water here. This fluorine content effects the bones and causes many diseases. De-fluorination is a programme that removes fluorine from the water. This big programme has been implemented in Andhra Pradesh and throughout the country. Research has been conducted from many years on this aspect. Now our scientists devised a small implement to filter water. If this instrument is used, we get water without fluorine. Health can be maintained by taking this water. They proved it. The instrument is very small and its cost doesn't exceed seven or eight hundred rupees. Shall we spare it to an outsider if he wants to take it? If we allow it for patent, we gain crores of rupees. We need not spend crores of rupees on it. But we are not allowing it for patent. If we change the law and if our youngsters make research and if we allow for patent, the world is ready to purchase it. Many countries are ready to take it.

We are nearer to Srisailam. Our books mentioned that Srisailam is famous for medicinal plants and herbal plants. These are mentioned in our traditional writings and *Puranas*. Can anybody understand them? If we show a herb and ask about its name, nobody is ready to tell its name. We may find one person among many. We are habituated to use Neem leaves in so many medicines and drink Neem juice for a long time as mentioned in Ayurveda. Of late, the foreigners recognised the medicinal values of Neem leaves. They are continuing research on it. Can't we do research on it here? Can't our doctors or scientists do it? Our Aswagandha which is known as "Zing seng" in other countries is so popular in the entire world. I don't know how many millions of dollars they are earning from it. What is it? It is known to all. Every physician of this country prescribes Aswagandha. Our country is famous for such herbal plants. Shall we allow all these to go outside? I say that we have to stop all these, for the sake of future

generations. We have to make all these for patent. We have to manufacture these medicines in India. So many medicines are not being used by us, but they are getting exported. Many pharmacists in Delhi and at some places are preparing the medicines and sending them out and earning millions of dollars. If we want to manufacture them in a large scale we can earn enormous money that will wipe out our entire poverty. If you say that according to Dunkel, if we allow them for patent, we will incur loss, what can I tell you? I don't know why this rumour has been spread.

Our country is rapidly developing. We have to take part in the development, taking place in other parts of the world. If they allow for patent, we have to follow suit. I am unable to understand when they change their patent law in order to gain, why don't we change such law when there is a situation that gives benefit to us. As it is being done by Congress, they are opposing it with a motto of opposing. But in this Dunkel proposal there is no such provision which is disadvantageous to us. If there is such situation, I will be the first person to oppose before you oppose it.

If you don't agree to Dunkel proposals, what is the next alternative? We have to think about it. What is in it and what is not in it—we will think this later. Somebody has to show the alternative. This is to be acceptable to our farmers. I ask the farmers—we don't have potash fertilizers in our country. This is known to all. We can't manufacture it here even if we break our heads. Raw material required for it is not available in our country. We have to get it from outside. Dollars are necessary for it. Nobody accepts our rupees. So we have to send something in order to get foreign exchange. There are many products which we don't possess. Though certain products are available in our country, they are not sufficient, such as petrol. How much petrol is being produced by us? The petrol and petroleum products from Bombay High comprise not even 40.0 per cent. The rest of 60.0 per cent, we have to get from outside—we have to purchase. Again dollars are required for it. So how do you manage without trade? This is a big country. We are trading with at least 50, 60 countries not with 160 countries.

How does the country sustain without this trade? If there is trade, the Dunkel proposals, GATT—all these are telling that the trade will be in the following manner. Intelligence lies in fighting with them where there is unfavourable condition and making it favourable to us. But not in telling that we don't agree to it and we live without potash or kerosene or any other product from outside; we build a compound wall around India and live in it. What is this situation? I don't understand what is this foolishness. Hence the Dunkel proposals are not meant for me or you or one country. These pertain to the method of trade that takes place among 160 countries. Experts took part in it. They listened to us in many aspects. But they agreed to many of our points put forth before them. Whenever we fought that certain proposals should not be applicable to India, they assured that the same would not be applicable to India. Despite all these, they are eluding the people unnecessarily. We do whatever is useful to the country. If it is not useful for the country, we don't do it. There is no problem in it. We did not do so many things. Today, we are envisaging a Rs. 30 crore project for rural schemes. Did we plan for it on the direction of the World Bank or IMF.

Shri Vijayabhaskara Reddy mentioned about the three schemes started on 15th August. They are very good schemes. One is related to towns, another pertains to rural areas and the remaining one meant for all the women. We are spending crore of rupees towards these schemes from the Central Government. Whatever might the World Bank or IMF tell about this? I don't understand why such false propaganda is being undertaken.

The days of those who make much noise, who try to spoil the meetings, who undertake processions in the streets and show black badges and who were considered great personalities have gone. The country is like a family. The family consists of 90 crore people. This family will not be maintained simply with slogans. We have to perform so many programmes. There may be so many defects. I am telling this also. I don't say that whatever has been done by any Congress government, any Chief Minister or any Prime Minister is

cent percent correct. We know what is to be done in many aspects. There is a tremendous change in the world. Nobody faced this situation in the past. Any country or even India in the past didn't face this situation which we are facing at present. The Communist Party, brought a new system for about 70 years. That system has been shattered. Nobody is asking it. Even the persons who hailed from those countries are proudly telling that they left communism and they have come to market economy. But we are not pronouncing it loudly. Because the great intellectual Jawaharlal Nehru devised mixed economy by giving prominence to both public sector and private sector. It is a boon to us. Since he has given this to us, we are ready to receive that system or this system. We are ready to face the ups and downs. We are ready to accept any new system or any change. But such power doesn't apply to many countries. They don't know what to do? They are asking us. They are getting satisfied whatever solutions we show them. They start thinking after seeing our small-scale industries. They are just thinking whether such industries are possible? Such industries are not existing in their countries.

We have got our own strength. We have to go forward with that strength. We rectify the defects, if any. Let the parties exist. We don't say 'no' to parties. Parties should exist. But they shouldn't spread false rumours. At present our citizens are sensible and intelligent. They do the things or take a decision by thinking about good and bad. So we are not trying to elude them. We have got number of local problems. The State Government is vigorously solving them. I simply gave the schemes. I am ready to sanction money. But the implementation lies with the State Government. The Constitution has provided such mutual relationship. I can't run alone. At the same time it is not possible for Shri Vijayabhaskara Reddy to run on his own accord. Both of us are tied up. This tie is very important.

We have accepted the principle of federalism. We have decided to live together. Either a Hindu or a Muslim or any other person, either forward or backward who does not know why and

where he was born. He doesn't have control over his birth. He didn't born by submitting an application to the Almighty to create him as a forward person, backward person, a Muslim or a Christian. He was just born as an accident. As you are a Hindu, you can't say to a Muslim that he has no right to live here. Nobody has got such guts. Many people live in this country. They live even if there is fighting or bloodshed. Nobody is willing to leave this country. When it is not possible, we have to live as good persons. It is useful to the country and all. I request you all not to arouse the people unnecessarily and separate them. But the country should continue as a secular state which is beyond religion. By saying beyond religion, I don't mean that we don't have any religion. Everybody will have his own religion. One will go to a temple. One will go to a mosque. One will go to a church. One will go somewhere. Why to object it. How many temples or churches or mosques are being constructed? Are we objecting them? We are not going to object them. But I request you all, it is not good on your part to link a caste to another caste, a religion to another religion and politicising the issue.

Need for Starting More Fertilizer Factories

I AM GRATEFUL to the farmers of India and all those people who invited me here to inaugurate this Factory. Since there are many farmers in Andhra Pradesh who use this fertilizer, it is justified that the Factory is established here. That is why this Factory will look after the needs of the farmers here, I am very happy.

Speech while dedicating Nagarjuna Fertilizer Factory to the nation, Kakinada,
8 January 1994

Since the past two years, a lot of discussions have been going on regarding Agricultural Policy, Industrial Policy and Labour Policy. In the past, we have established industries in the public sector. But now there is no money in the public sector. It is a waste to blame anyone for this. But the fact that the public sector cannot satisfy the needs of this nation anymore has been proved.

What should we follow? Do we follow the system of the monopoly of public sector or do we follow the precepts, given by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru regarding the viability of mixed economy? There has been some criticism that we are giving too much boost to private sector at the cost of the public sector. If they had thought about the good which accrued out of this policy change, all this criticism would not have been generated. These discussions would not have taken place in this country. Pandit Nehru accepted both sectors and said that there should be a vital link between the public and private sectors.

The farmers need fertilizers. When there is no money to establish fertilizer factories in the public sector, I donot see the reason why the farmers themselves are not coming forward to build fertilizer factories. I asked Sri Raju about the cost of this unit. He said that it was about 1,190 crore or 1,200 crore of rupees. "How much did our Government give?" I asked, "You did not give anything" he said. I am very happy. I have 1,200 crore saved from my treasury. I will use those 1,200 crore for the welfare of the poor. I will use that to build schools. I will use that amount to develop villages. I have told the Planning Commission that we have to spend Rs. 30,000 crore for the development of villages, in the Eighth Plan. Before, it used to be seven or eight thousand crore. Where is seven thousand and where is 30 thousand. The Members of the Planning Commision were surprised. I told them that it was all right. We can raise the amount and I told them so. How did I say that? On what basis? This is the basis of my statement. I have said that we have saved 1,200 crore. Well, I also think that we have earned 1,200 of that 30,000 crore. It is not possible to have both in this country. The farmers want fertilizer, we need thousands of

crores for this. The whole country needs power. For that we need thousands of crores. The poor need schools, food and clothing. Villages need so many things and we know that since we all come from villages. It is proved beyond doubt that we cannot have both of these. It is like a blanket which cannot cover the toes and the head at the same time.

Now we have a solution. Don't I know the fact that there is money in these coastal districts? In the fifties, if a movie was not released here, people used to vow to see the movie by going all the way to Madras. Since the movies are playing here, that money is saved at least. If the money spent in one trip is spent in buying shares, a fertilizer factory will come up. If the lakhs of farmers come to a decision that they need not get anything from the Government and they build factories on their own, the country will benefit. No doubt we will help them in any small way we can. There is no problem, we have that much influence. Unfortunately, we had to sell our gold reserves three years back. Luckily and thanks to all of you, we have got it back. Since we have a very good credit rating, there is no problem.

There is a valid doubt regarding Fertilizer Policy. You all know that. Today, I have come to open this Factory. These people belonging to the Factory have come and asked me, "How will our Factory run without subsidy?" The Members of Parliament sat down and deliberated on subsidies and suggested to the Government that these should be done away with and some other facilities should be created. I accepted their suggestion completely. Yet we are giving subsidy.

Today, if we import DAP, it costs less while the DAP manufactured in the country costs more. What should I do? Should I see that the farmers are not put to any loss. I have the responsibility to strike a balance between the two. You all should think. We should walk on this path between the two extremes. On the one side we should see that our factories are not closed and on the other if we can get DAP cheaply through imports, we should not stop that.

This was our thinking. But many people were against this. I told them with all humility that I would continue to import the DAP for one more year. What I want is that the factories here should stop overspending. They should become economical. They are slowly realising that they will help the farmers as much as they can. They are slowly realising that they have to do without subsidy. They have their problems, labour problems. They should rectify these problems and stop retrenching labour on large scale. These poor people have worked till now and if you suddenly ask them to leave, where will they go? We should start from there and see that we mould the policy in such a way that everyone is benefited. That is what we are doing. We will finalise this in the next year. I hope that this change will be over in two or three years. For this the farmers, Labour Department and the industry have to help us. Because this is not just my work. It is a must, in today's policy. If not today, it will happen tomorrow.

Subsidy is only a temporary measure but not a final solution. Since the Parliament Committee itself is telling that there is no alternative, who am I to say no. And I also agree with them. So we all should discuss and find a solution to this. One solution has been found. But we will try for more till the next year.

The country is facing a transition period from one situation to another. Even though the policy is same, we are implementing the policy in another guise. So since these are all the problems of transition, all of you should realise that this is not a time to quarrel. If you want to discuss and find a solution, let us do so. We should come to a consensus and we should see that this nation does not face any disturbance till the end of the century.

Today, I am very happy. They showed me the plan. They have given scope for expansion. Certainly there is a need for expansion. There is every reason to increase this. This is a time for growth and not for fall. The population is rising and so the situation is same in all fields. We have to see far. To this end we all should come together. There is nothing intricate in this. Wherever I went,

even to the small villages in the north, they listened happily and did not think that it was above their heads. Our people have this fine thinking and they listen to anyone who talks sense and appreciate it. They may not have studied BAs and MAs and they may not have degrees. But the greatest degree is innate intelligence. So there is no problem which cannot be solved in this country as long as we clearly explain. Since God has given me the patience to explain, let us all solve the problems.

At this time, I wanted to speak not only about the Factory but also about the problems which arise out of the transition. Please think hard on these words. A lot of industrialisation should take place in this State. Compared to the industries in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh is lagging far behind. Of course, there are many who are behind us. Rather than being content with this we should try to develop more. There is lot of scope. So let us take this industrialisation forward.

Bringing People Together through Railways

THE PROGRAMME OF gauge conversion has been a boon to India. Earlier, one or two lines were converted in every Five Year Plan but a sustained country-wide total programme of gauge conversion was undertaken only in this Plan and, I am glad that Jaffer Shariefji was the one who initiated it, got me to accept it and now you can be sure that the whole country will have only one gauge all over within a period of 9 or 10 years and this is where the difficulty comes. The whole programme covers two Five Year Plans. Therefore, in every

State, some portion of this work has to spill over to the next Five Year Plan. There is something which is just not possible to avoid. Jaffer Shariefji has got himself into a very difficult situation by starting this programme. In the Parliament, when he came with the first details of the programme, Members from two or three States almost jumped on him saying that their States did not have a fair share. Quite natural for representatives of the people, who wish that their own respective areas should get first priority. But in this scramble, what is being missed by them is that a massive programme has been started in this country.

I think, we should be happy that this programme has been taken up, because in old States, we had lots of rajas, maharajas, nawabs, and so on. Each had his own gauge, somebody had a narrow gauge, somebody had a narrower gauge, somebody had a broad gauge, some other people had a meter gauge or yard gauge. Whatever you call it, there are so many gauges, multiplicity of gauges and each part of this multiplicity has become a great bottleneck. From north to south, if you divide India into two parts, the Western Ghats has not seen any great industrialisation, because that part is predominantly meter gauge. Right down to Kanyakumari, beyond Madras—this side of Madras—railway is mostly meter gauge. I don't know why? The result is that today, we have to make up for all these multiplicity of gauges, bring one gauge and this programme is a vast programme, is an extensive programme. I am sure, that our MPs will bear with us, with Jaffer Shariefji and I understand that this has to be done in 10 years and not in five.

Having said this, whatever the priorities, high or low, these are matters, which they can certainly discuss with him. What you want him to do? So I can only say that when a programme like this is taken up, one has to be patient. I can help, if there is anything that is being neglected, or ignored, you can always make marginal changes but the fact of the matter is that the entire programme of 12,000 kms cannot be taken up in one Five Year Plan. We will make adjustments wherever necessary and there is demand, greater demand for new lines. Then, of course, demand for electrification

and demand for doubling. Lots of programmes they are taking up but somehow, this time, I thought that this gauge conversion is the single most important programme which will open up and give a shot in the arm to the industrialisation of the country. It will have so many by-products. So many things by way of benefits, that this needs to be given top priority.

Our railways, on the whole, have done well. Our railway network is the largest in the world, railway is the poor man's transport and that is why I have also requested Jaffer Shariefji to see if more traffic could be carried by railways because that saves money, fuel, petrol and a lot of road blocking and so on. So this comparative advantage of railways has to be utilised to the fullest extent. Then, there is the question of speed. The speed of meter gauge and narrow gauge is well-known. Lots of jokes about it. They say you can get down from the train from the first compartment and talk to your friend and catch the last compartment without any difficulty. The speed is very very slow and this slowness of other gauges makes for a lot of bottlenecks. All this needs to be corrected and, I am sure, as a result of this programme, these things need to be got corrected. Lord Krishna in Guruvayur, I am happy to find, is now able to communicate very well with Lord Krishna of Mathura and Lord Krishna of Dwaraka. I say to Jaffer Shariefji, you connect only the temples and mosques of India, the whole of India will be covered. There is no need for you to draw another map at all. Look at the national integration of all these great men. Mathura, the main centre of the Krishna literature, was evolved by a Saint, a great poet from the South, Vallabhacharya. Here, in Guruvayur again the Krishna *Sahitya* has got a shot in the arm. Then you have a place called Muvva near Vijayawada where not less than a 100-200 villages have this tradition of the Krishna literature. Lots of areas where we have either Ram or Krishna or on the Islamic side, the Jama Masjids, we have the great institutions of learning. They are dotting all over the country.

So, this country has evolved as an integrated country, it has not evolved as different pieces. It has been completely integrated,

culturally, religiously. They have done it. We do not have to do anything, only maintain what our forefathers have done. Don't spoil it. That is all what we have to do. Don't spoil what our forefathers have given us as the greatest tradition for hundreds and hundreds of years, just keep it up. If you can improve upon it, very good, if you cannot, don't spoil it, don't destroy it. Keep it up as it is. Everything will take care of itself. This is what we have got and this is what we have to carry on. The railways and all means of communication, transport, had a great effect on the integration of the country. People are coming from Kasi, Varanasi and going to Rameswaram in the south, and all the way to Badrinath, Kedarnath; and to Dwaraka in the west and then to Guwahati and Manipur in the east and North-East. These are the landmarks, some of the landmarks, and not all. They have made this country culturally one. The great Sankaracharya, look at the man; within 32 years of life, may be active life of 15 or 20 years, he went all over the place, all over the country, all the four *Dhams*, he had instituted and written how much; Oh! My God!

So, this is a land of tradition, this is a land of harmony, this is a land of friendship, this is a land where peace prevails, peace has always prevailed. Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti, this is what we say. This land has always seen mankind as one. It has never made distinctions in so far as welfare is concerned. This land has always striven for the welfare of all. *Sarvey Shyam*, never say anything about one section, no sectional thinking. Now, this is the land, we are born in, this is the land, we are privileged to be born in, let us keep up this great tradition. And to the extent railways and other modes of transport can bring people together, for peace, for devotion, for pilgrimage, for any other reason, may be political meetings and conventions, for any reason, if they come together, if they bring people together, that is an act of integration of the people.

Need for Technology Upgradation in Small Industries

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be in your midst today to initiate the proceedings of INDIA INVESMART.

At the outset, I would like to convey my congratulations to the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the Ministry of Industry for taking the initiative to organise a programme of this nature. Perhaps it is for the first time that a focussed programme, which envisages a project approach to investment promotion in certain priority sectors of the economy is being held in India. The Government of India, assisted by UNIDO, has facilitated contact between potential foreign and domestic investors through a specific shelf of projects. At a juncture when India is poised for take-off into a market induced path of growth, a programme of this nature is, indeed, very relevant and timely.

The promotion of foreign direct investment is an important cornerstone of the major programme of economic reforms initiated by the Government of India in 1991. These reforms, along with doing away with outmoded regulations and controls, seek to facilitate the integration of the Indian economy with the global economy. By doing so, it is our endeavour to make Indian industry internationally competitive, ensure optimal utilisation of human resources and thus transform India into a major player in the scenario of the economy of the world.

The INDIA INVESMART assumes a special significance in this context. Also, the fact that most of the identified projects are in the small and medium enterprises sector is equally important. This sector has led the process of economic growth in a number of developing countries and, moreover, in India it is particularly

important for its relatively greater employment potential. Thus, it has been the effort of my Government to strengthen industries in this sector through promotion of competition, efficiency, technology upgradation and enhancement of export capability.

At this juncture, I would like to say that the help of the UNIDO, apart from what it has been doing already, lies primarily in the upgradation of technology in the small-scale sector. There have been lot of eyebrows raised in this country when we also brought the small-scale sector in the programme of liberalisation. It was said very emphatically that the small-scale sector will not be able to stand competition with the bigger ones and it will simply fade away. Now, this is where the challenge needs to be taken up. The programme which you have here is, of course, important. You bring the entrepreneurs and the need of the industry together and wherever it is necessary, wherever it is possible, you will have these tie ups at the end of the conference and you may have to have several meetings like this or several tie ups like this. This is good in itself. But there is a problem which needs to be addressed to, both by the developing countries and also by the UNIDO.

The problem, as I said is of technology. This is a mistaken notion that the small-scale sector, the khadi, the cottage industry sector or the tiny sector, are all meant for inferior technologies. To what extent can you dispel this notion. I am sure, it is based on the assumption that consciously or sub-consciously quality is equated with size. If it is a big industry, then we think that it is possible to have a very superior kind of technology. I beg to differ. And I'll give you an example. About 22 or 23 years back, when I was Education Minister of Andhra Pradesh and was visiting Pondicherry, I was told something about a computer. I didn't know what a computer was. So, some boys came and said, "We are constructing a computer here, please come and see." It was for the first time that I came to know that the boys themselves were being encouraged to construct a computer. They took me to a big room, almost like a hall, and they had assembled many things and they showed this as a computer. It was almost as big as this room.

Then it came to our mainframe computer. Then it came to desktop. Then it came to laptop. Now, it is of the size of a book. The size coming down has not really brought the technology down. In fact, it has taken the technology up. So, in this age of miniaturisation without loss of quality, the challenge is quite clear to any one and that challenge needs to be taken up in this sector of industrialisation because we are not just enamoured of it, but we want it in this country, we want the largest possible employment to be given to the largest number of people without sacrificing quality. It is quite easy to go on adding to this size. I am not really propounding a theory here. I am just telling you what our experience is.

When you get into social problems, problems of rehabilitation, problems of all kinds, where people have to be brought from different places, made to live in one place totally different from the ambience in which they were living before, you see all the problems in sectoral industries before your very eyes. Open a newspaper, it will be full of these problems. Now, if you take into account the social cost, you will find that whatever extra you have to spend to make it small, will be well-spent; it will be worth spending. So, this economics also has to be fully calculated. I have a feeling that in the Eighth Five Year Plan since we have the largest possible employment as one of our parameters of the Plan, how do we go about making it a success, how do we go about addressing that problem. The UNIDO should help us in creating the need for higher technology, more sophisticated but which gives a larger amount of employment. It looks like contradiction in today's context, but it is not and it should not. So, the challenge is not an ordinary challenge. Take environment for instance. The care for environment, the concern for environment, which has become universal today, restricts the size, restricts many of the other parameters in industry which we had taken for granted for years and years. Now, how do you cope with this restriction. How do you cope with this constraint—constraint of size, environment and then resources. So, this is the kind of challenge which we have to face in the coming years. These constraints are not made by Governments. These

constraints are made by sociologists, economists and the very fact that we cannot really go on concentrating industries at one place in creating problems of multifarious kinds, this is the problem you have to address. But I am just indicating the kind of problems that we are running into, we are likely to run into more and more as we go along the path of industrialisation.

With the introduction of economic reforms, the role of Government has changed from that of a regulator to a facilitator. That is why the challenge today is a little tougher. Today, my problem as a facilitator also is much more tough, much more difficult than either as a regulator or even as an agency or as an authority to find funds. We did find funds for more than forty years. It is not as though we did not find funds; the amount of money that we have spent in our public sector industries is perhaps astronomical. We cannot do it any more at that rate. And, that is one of the reasons where we have to open up, liberalise, get investment from wherever it is available, subject of course to certain national needs and aspirations.

But today's challenge as you can see is much more complex. No one has ready answer, no one has worked on these problems in this interdisciplinary fashion. And in the Government, the file goes from ministry to ministry and each ministry puts one spoke; that is not the way. Even administratively we will have to find a way of dealing with the problem from several angles, at the same time not taking the time which each ministry takes. Therefore, the change that is coming is total and the requirement that is coming is interdisciplinary and it is absolutely comprehensive. You cannot make it bit by bit and this kind of culture has to come, the interdisciplinary culture, the culture where national goals are kept in view, where just copying from abroad is not going to help. Those who are in research would have to understand that they have not had the last say in everything, they have not had the last word in everything; otherwise, the research would dry up. So, there is so much scope for further research. It is not just one kind of research, it will have to be research impacting on different areas of activity

in human life. So, it has to be a very different kind of research that we will have to do while industrialisation takes place.

So, I am happy about the limited purpose for which this meeting has been called. In fact, I was trying to see if I could keep track of what is happening here and be told about the results at the end of the Conference so that I can make my own assessment of what has been done here, where things have gone right and what more needs to be done.

The focus, accordingly, would be on one-to-one business discussions. The catalytic role being played by the Government is particularly relevant for the small and medium enterprise who often do not possess adequate means of their own to reach out to their counterparts elsewhere.

The process of economic reforms has opened up tremendous avenues for foreign investors. It is important to appreciate that integration of our economy with the global economy is a two way process in which not only our commitment, but the will of the international community to accept and facilitate our integration is also critical. India offers to the world a vast market, availability of skilled manpower including competent professional managers, a diversified domestic industrial base, well developed capital markets, banking infrastructure and financial services and , above all, a stable democratic political environment . Being a capital-scarce economy we do welcome foreign investments but at the same time, developed countries too require the stimulus of a market like India to emerge out of a depressed economic situation. In short, the relationship between domestic and foreign industry needs to be more dynamic than it has been in the past in terms of both technology and investment. The Government will, therefore, welcome foreign investment which is in the interest of India's industrial development.

The INDIA INVESMART, to my mind, could not have been held at a more appropriate time than this when the world is looking

at the Indian market with renewed interest. The response to the structural reforms is already evident in the form of considerable buoyancy in approvals granted for foreign direct investments, a soaring foreign currency reserve, fairly stable priceline. However, while foreign investors have shown an interest in our changed industrial environment, I must admit that the translation of foreign investment approvals into actual projects on the ground has been somewhat below expectation so far. While it may be sound business sense to view an investment destination with caution, let me reiterate that the Government's policy has the sanction of the people and there is no question of any reversal in it, if that is what is inhibiting the investors. I am sure, you will get ample evidence of this when you actually establish here. INVESMART is a programme designed to instil this confidence in our investors.

Before I conclude, I would like to reiterate that a faster emergence of understanding and goodwill among the international community for India's economic reforms is important not merely for its sustenance and pace but also its direction. I have always, at every opportunity, stated unequivocally that we are passing through an important transition in our economy and reorienting our policies in a far-reaching manner, in a manner in which we will find the change in the shortest possible time and the change which is needed, at the same time be multi-faceted so that after five or ten years we do not find ourselves faced with new problems. We will anticipate the programmes as we go along; we will sit with those who are able to solve each of those problems, coordinate these activities and go ahead. However, this reorientation involves a careful calibration of economic restructuring and socio-economic stability. In a democracy as large as ours, the process of change is bound to be gradual; which perhaps is the price one has to pay in the interest of stability. Nevertheless, I am confident that with the first hand knowledge which you will acquire, you will be able to promote and project India in its true perspective i.e., as a country which today offers vast opportunities for investment and a large market for consumption. I am, therefore, inclined to view you as future ambassadors of goodwill, apart from being foreign investors looking for a successful conclusion of business pursuits.

Financing of Private Sector Power Projects

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to join you at this conference on Development of Financing of Private Sector Power Projects in India. It is, indeed, timely.

I would at the outset like to congratulate the organisers for providing this forum to enable all those interested in the power sector to discuss the issues involved. May I take this opportunity to give you some idea of the thinking that went into the formulation of the policy for this sector and the expectations of what is to be achieved.

Salveji has given you lot of details and I have no intention of repeating them. The situation is at once pretty good and pretty grim. What we have achieved during the last forty years is no mean achievement. But what we have to achieve in future is a daunting task. When the population of the country increases at this rate, one cannot expect everything else to increase at the same rate. So, these are not the failures of the system, as the present tendency is to look at them, to denigrate everything that has been done. This is not realistic. This is not based on facts. The fact, therefore, has to be first ascertained. And, the fact is that we have not been able to catch up with the increase in the needs when population has been increasing steadily, and that is why we are lagging behind. And when you also consider where we started, it is not as though to the 360 or 370 million population that we had in 1947, everything was available. The shortages started in 1947. That is one fact which is generally forgotten and we start feeling a little despondent about the future. If only population had been, say, 600 million today instead of 900, you can imagine that we would not be needing all

these conferences today. So, there are certain combination of circumstances as a result of which we find that the more we run today the more we find ourselves at the same place and, therefore, we have to run faster. It's that simple.

In electricity, we did not know what electricity was. Can you imagine that in our villages, villages lived by people like me who couldn't be even in those days considered to be less than progressive, we got electricity in 1960, 12 or 13 years after independence. And since then, there are thousands of villages even today which don't have electricity. We have calculated the per capita consumption of electricity. Some times I feel amused whether those who have not seen the face of electricity are also included in this to work out the per capita. It is ridiculous but true that the needs have been growing. And, then the incidence. We have several areas, vast areas which have not been touched by electricity of any kind, even today. Those areas have to be covered. And, if you have to cover those very distant areas, the Electricity Boards find that it is not an economic proposition to go to them. From their point of view it is a very sensible approach. But from our point of view we cannot ask some people in the country to go without electricity for the simple reason that they committed the sin of being born in distant areas. This is not all, whether it is electricity or drinking water or anything, these are elementary needs of the people and these elementary needs of the people have to be supplied, have to be given to them, made available to them wherever they are in the vast sub-continent of India. You cannot say that because there is a distant area, you cannot reach, therefore they will be out of the reach of electricity and drinking water for ever. So, these are some of the complicated matters we have been looking into. You can dig a drinking water well at the site, but electricity has to go from long distances. That is one of the reasons why they have been deprived of electricity so far.

So, there is a welfare element in this; there is a social element in this; and of course when these two elements are mixed with the element of economic viability of the scheme then evidently some

people will be left out because catering to them is not viable economically. So, it is not as though we have been simply wasting our money or not doing anything at all. But because of all these things over the years today have improved. In my village, I have that experience fresh in my memory today. When they surveyed it they said it cannot become viable until and unless you have five transformers which means five hundred or four hundred consumers. We couldn't manufacture 400 consumers overnight. And, still for about 8 or 9 months, we went from place to place, farmer to farmer, person to person, household to household, to tell them that there is such a thing as electricity and you don't have to pour kerosene in your lamps. Without doing all this, you just press a button and electricity comes and you can have your water pumped out. All these things had to be told to the people over months and months, only then they agreed. So, you have to educate the people, get them ready to even receive the benefit of electricity when it comes because they just do not know what it is.

But remember, once they are used to it, once they have seen the benefit of it, within one year their demand will rise exponentially and they will *gherao* you wherever you go and say, oh! You got electricity in your village, what about our village, what about the other villages, and then you won't be able to cope up. This is how in a developing country demand grows exponentially. Never ever think that there will be no demand in a developing country. I am saying this from personal experience. This is the experience of all of us.

Therefore, any one coming to a developing country for investment has to remove one fear from his mind that whatever he is bringing here will not have customers, will not have buyers, will not have market. This country is assured by the grace of God of the market, which perhaps only this country can provide and it is a free market. There are no shackles anywhere. Therefore, I would like to tell my friends who wish to invest in India that they will never regret in coming here. This is what I told my friends from the industrial sector, captains of industry in all developed countries.

Not that they don't know India, they know India, but they are a little annoyed with all the rules, regulations etc. that we used to have under a particular policy. Yes, that policy has served its utility. Today, we can change policies. We are not inflexible, we are not wedded to anything.

This is what I would like to tell our friends who have come here from long distance to sit with us, to find out how this private enterprise in electricity can be financed successfully without posing any threats or dangers to the investor or the consumer. This is a very important topic. We have been battling with it for quite some time. We have been able to clear many things, clean up much of the regulation and other inhibiting factors that used to be there. Today, the things are much clearer, much easier, but at the same time we have problems of tariffs. Is it possible for us to afford this tariff? So many other technical and non-technical matters, particularly financial matters come up.

But I am absolutely clear in my mind that if there is any item of infrastructure for which we would go in, we would go all out for electricity. There is nothing more important than electricity in this country because we are on the eve of a big industrialisation programme. We would like this, we would like all the necessary power to be available at the earliest. If you could do it one Plan advance, I would be very happy because our funds, Government funds which were being locked into this big programme, huge programme of electricity etc., those funds are needed elsewhere also. We want education, public health, roads, and welfare. All those programmes are suffering because everything is being drained into these infrastructural projects. We would like this money to be relieved as a result of the participation of the private sector whether Indian or non-Indian. We would like to have it at the earliest. So, this substitution has to come.

The Government is responsible for the welfare of the people. No one is going to come and do these things for us and we don't want anyone to come to do these things. The Government has to

do it and, unfortunately, the Government doesn't have funds at the moment. It has no funds to cover all these programmes. In all activities the Government has to spend money. Now I think, the time has come when the private sector can come and relieve the Government of all this strain. Once this happens, I can gradually increase my outlays on the welfare of the people which I am doing already.

So, please consider these things. This is a serious discussion for which you have come here. This is not academic. You are not going to sit tight over these things. It is urgent, we want it. Therefore, more than the participants, the Government wants it. Please go ahead, give us your advice, give us some formula. We can go on improving it as we go along. I don't want anything perfect. I mean, I am not sure that anything perfect can emerge in the very first attempt. It doesn't matter. I am prepared to take it if it is reasonably good, reasonably workable and it gets me going on the right path, on the path of progress.

Towards Effective Management of Agricultural Research

I AM HAPPY to be present on the occasion of the inauguration of the week-long Mid-Term Meeting of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. I understand that delegates representing the sponsors and members of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the Technical Advisory Committee, regional representatives and the chairmen of the

Speech while inaugurating the Mid-Term Meeting of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, New Delhi, 23 May 1994

Boards of Trustees and Directors of the 18 research institutions functioning under the aegis of the CGIAR are meeting to discuss their policies and programmes at this juncture when the role of such a supranational organisation supporting international agricultural research is under review. It is, indeed, an appropriate occasion for us to host the Mid-Term Meeting in India for the first time.

It is also appropriate that the meeting is being held in India which has been one of the early users and beneficiaries of the international agricultural research system, as also a contributor to the strength of this system. While the CGIAR came into existence in 1971, institutions like the International Rice Research Institute and the International Centre for Maize and Wheat Improvement were in existence even earlier. The collaboration of Indian scientists with scientists of these institutes led to the introduction of high yielding dwarf varieties of wheat and rice, which became the foundation of the Green Revolution in India. No one can forget the contribution of Dr Norman Borlaug to making available wheat varieties with dwarf characteristics and the ability to respond with high yields to the use of high doses of inputs.

At the same time, Indian agricultural scientists have been contributing to the work of the CGIAR research institutes and other scientific establishments throughout the world. Science has always been a two way traffic. Agricultural scientists of this country have made a name for providing us the basis of progress in agricultural research and new technology in diverse areas. From a situation where we were importing about 10 per cent of our foodgrains requirement in the mid-60s, we are now producing adequate foodgrains and other agricultural crops. Production of fruits and vegetables, milk and livestock products, and marine products have gone up dramatically. India has become a regular exporter of rice and its presence in the international agricultural commodities market is bound to increase. We welcome the collaboration between the institutes of the CGIR system and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Agricultural Universities in India, which has also contributed to this satisfactory state of affairs.

Indian expertise in agricultural research has led to certain patterns of organisation of research which have been adopted in many developing countries. The crop based or discipline based coordinated research projects are the model of choice for organising a network of research through a multiplicity of agencies. The extension system based on national demonstrations and lab-to-land programme providing for scientist-user interface has also been adopted as ideal extension methodology. However, there is scope for evolution of more efficient and effective systems for management of agricultural research.

The problems faced by world agriculture are essentially the issues of providing sufficient food, fibre and other raw material needs of the rapidly expanding world population. In addition to the population factor, we are confronted with the issue of urbanisation which takes away valuable agricultural land for non-agricultural uses, the state of the environment and fears about the sustainability of the present agricultural system. If today many countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa are growing more food for meeting the requirements of their people, the credit goes to the Green Revolution. The criticism that the Green Revolution benefited only some categories and not others is not entirely true. For, without the food produced by the Green Revolution, large population would have been facing hunger. It is also not entirely correct to say that the Green Revolution technology is harmful to the environment. When these technologies were introduced, the paramount need was to produce more food. No doubt, there are issues of excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and their impact on the environment. It is these issues, which are being addressed by scientists now. Without the additional food produced by the Green Revolution, the pressure on our limited land resources in India and other developing countries would have been acute, leading to situations like further clearing of forest land, which is not good for the environment.

If you take only one country—India—you will come to some very interesting conclusions. But I am sure this Conference is not

concentrating only on one country. You are presumably talking about many other countries; and the food shortage and food requirements of the people of the world in general is perhaps what you are concentrating on. Even so, a very populous country like India where the population is growing rapidly is a case in point and perhaps it points the way to the real problems we are faced with.

I understand from our demographers in India that the population of India is going to rise though the rate is coming down very slowly, but the aggregate base being very big, the most optimistic projections place India's population at a figure which is not very definite, they are not very definite about it because no one is definite about human behaviour, they place it between 1.2 billion to 1.8 billion. This is within a period of 40 to 50 years, that is, say, middle of the 21st century. Now, these are the figures, which I have just been able to collect in some other connection. This gives us an idea of what we are in for, in India itself. In the last 40-50 years we have done well. The population has gone up from 350 or 360 million to 900 million and the food production has gone up from 50 to 180 million tonnes, which is more or less the same as the increase in population.

We are faced with the task of doubling the food output because if you take the maximum figure at which India's population is likely to be stabilised according to demographers, it is 1.8 billion, which is exactly the double of what we have today. You have to allow for rise in consumption levels. Thirdly, you also have to allow the fact that any country which just feeds its population does no favour to anybody else. You are only feeding your population. If you are able to feed some more, in other countries, similarly placed or even placed in worse conditions and in greater need of food than India as a large country, as an important agricultural country can vindicate its position as not only self-sufficient but to be able to help others to some extent. Where does that take you? That takes you to an approximate figure of 400 million tonnes. But from 180 million tonnes today you have to reach 400 million or even more within 50 years. This is the task. I don't say the task is

impossible but it is attended with so much of hard work that needs to be done and you have to be running and running all the time in order to remain where you are. This is the position in India itself. This is a very rough calculation that I have made.

Look at our land. You cannot produce by the use of more and more of chemical fertilizers, particularly with the environmentalists breathing down your necks and my neck. You cannot produce at this rate. You cannot increase the per-acre yields because in Punjab, Haryana, coastal Andhra, etc. they have reached the maximum that they are capable of. After all by putting bigger inputs you just can't take bigger outputs. It is not that simple in agriculture, as you all know. Therefore, your conventional methods,—I don't even call them conventional, I call them the Green Revolution methods are going to be found inadequate hereafter.

Look at the waterlogging problems in the coastal areas. No one seems to have even thought about these, leave alone doing something about it. There are some drainage programmes aided by the World Bank and so on but they are just a drop in the ocean. They are not adequate at all. On the one hand you have Rajasthan where every drop of water needs to be conserved, and on the other, you have enormous quantities of water being wasted and you cannot do anything about stopping the wastage. What do you do? Now, these are some of the scientific challenges that we have.

A very big percentage of our land is alkaline. Go to any village in India, at least I know, thousands of villages I have visited, in the very vicinity of the village, you will find big stretches of alkaline land. Nothing grows in this land. To be able to grow foodgrains or any crop in an alkaline land is again one of the challenges to the agricultural scientific community. Then you have areas where we have small tanks, lots of tank areas as you know. Apart from the deltas, all the other areas are tank areas, there are small ponds and tanks which are to be filled three or four times before they give you one crop. In the rainy season the tank gets full

once, twice; but the drainage is so much that before the crop is out, the water is drained out of the tank. If you don't get third shower or the fourth shower, then whatever the farmer has spent by way of investment on the crops is wasted. He doesn't even get enough grass. So, this is the position.

So, the specific problems from place to place, area to area, village to village if you wish, need a good deal of micro-planning, good deal of details. You will have to categorise what kind of problems there could be. If you have more thorough look, closer look, you will find there will be hundreds of kinds of problems. Have we gone into all those hundreds of problems, categorising them? We have only tried to produce what we need, by hook or by crook—all right, get hold of the best land, best farmers, everything best. Naturally, they have delivered the goods. But what about the man who is not the best, his land is not the best. He may be very good, his land is not the best. So, land improvement is a very important factor in countries like India where the land, after all is scarce. The average per capita availability of land in America is three times or four times that of in India. Then there are about two or three per cent of people living on land there, but 60 per cent are living on land here. So, where do you compare, where do you find yourself when compared to other countries? We have a long way to go and these small specific—area-specific, even plot-specific problems—have to be gone into.

Then take the rainfall, the kind of unpredictability of rainfall, and even predictably the kind of variety in rainfall; in one area you will have to have a particular kind of seed which will be of no use in another area. Therefore, the seed also has to be area-specific, climate-specific, condition-specific. Now, we have only been working on agriculture at the general level. From the general to specific is a very long journey and that is still to be taken.

So, number one, our per acre yields which are highest today are likely to fall. Then you have to think of new areas where the land has not been subjected to too much input and yet it is fertile like the

Gangetic plain, like Bihar, like so many other areas. There are areas, but they have to be first given whatever facelift they need. And finally reaching 400 million tonnes mark is a real daunting problem even for our own population.

So, this is the measure of challenge, the magnitude of the challenge that we have to face. And, we would certainly like to spare something for other countries if we can. We would like to. In fact, we have tried to do it. Even in our difficult condition sometimes, we have been helping others. I know when Mrs Gandhi was the Prime Minister, there was some SOS from some countries—I don't want to name these countries. From the high seas, ships were diverted. She said, "Don't come here, go to such countries, which need the foodgrains more." We had some imports coming from some other country. So, we had done that. Right now whatever is possible, we are doing. We would like to do more.

So, these are the problems cumulatively. Even in one country like India I can imagine, in other countries, problems are immensely more complex because there the tradition is lacking. In many countries the traditions are lacking. I have seen in some countries tractors everywhere but no oil. Now, the people have been laughing at the bullocks in India. But they have been feeding us for thousands of years. The tractors in other countries brought by the notes written by foreign educated bureaucrats, maybe, are lying there. How can a country which has no oil of its own, think of agriculture by tractors? This is just commonsense to me but then they do it. They do it and come to grief. So, there is a lot of mismatch, lot of wrong thinking, lot of inappropriate thinking, at the expert level also. There are some experts who are good everywhere except the country they are working in. These are facts of life and you cannot make the poor farmer poor as he is, indigent as he is. You may be experimenting with a land with a country but please don't experiment with poor people there. Go to some place where people can also think of running some risks. We cannot run risks in India any more.

Therefore, I would like you to think of the whole world, think of all the varieties that God has given to this globe, and at the same time think of the need to find differentiated and properly considered prescriptions for each of these varieties rather than tarring everything with one kind of brush. That is not going to work in agriculture. Every plot of land is like a human being. It has to be tended like a child and that is what we, the farmers, think about our land. Ask me and I can tell you the characteristics of each survey number, which, I own in my village because I have seen it. I have seen it yield, under what conditions it yields, under what conditions it refuses to yield. So, it is not just one stretch of land and you can do anything and it will grow. It is not like that. It is not like a factory production in fact. Therefore, it is something much more living, than factory production. Agriculture has to be tended like that, like a child and like a mother we have to do it.

So, please go into all these varieties of circumstances, problems, and challenges for the whole world—and only then comes the food problem or the problem of taking something from mother earth and giving it back. So there is ample opportunity for earth to replenish itself, nature to replenish itself, that is what we are now calling it sustainable, having forgotten about it for hundreds of years. Now we have to at least return to that concept of sustainability. I hope the scientists today will be the first to change to this. If they change, everything else changes. After all the people who are billionaires and millionaires, whatever they have become, whatever they are, it is because of the scientists. Now, if you change the course of science, the course of progress in the world can change. If you don't change, nothing else changes. Our speeches will not change anything. It is your work in the laboratories and the very outlook that will change the course of progress of mankind. I am not just praising you or flattering you, I am telling you the facts of life. Science and scientists are a fact of life. Science and Scientists are a need of life. We just cannot wish you away. You are there for good and human progress is something completely bound up with you and your thinking and your approach and your enlightenment.

III

Science & Technology and Environment

Launching of INSAT -2B

I AM DELIGHTED to inform the Honourable Members of the House that the second indigenously built, second generation multipurpose geostationary satellite, INSAT-2B has been successfully placed in its orbital position and all the payloads have been switched on. The Spacecraft has been declared fully operational.

The 1932 kg. satellite was successfully launched by the Ariane launch vehicle on 23 July 1993 and was injected into a geostationary transfer orbit. Immediately following the launch several critical manoeuvres were carried out using the systems on board the satellite, by the INSAT Master Control Facility at Hassan in Karnataka. The satellite was first placed in a near geosynchronous orbit, nearly 36,000 kms above the earth, by firing the liquid apogee motor in three stages. Then the Spacecraft was allowed to move slowly towards its final orbital position at 93.5 degree east longitude and all the deployments were carried out. INSAT-2B achieved its full in-orbit configuration on schedule, due to the excellent performance of all the systems on board.

INSAT-2B carries 18 C-band transponders including six in extended C-band, 2 high power S-band transponders, a Very High Resolution Radiometer for meteorological imaging, a Data Relay Transponder and a Search and Rescue Payload. A series of extensive checks and characterisation of all the payloads have been carried out and the Spacecraft will be put into regular operational use from 15 August 1993.

INSAT-2B will add capacity to the INSAT system for more long distance telecommunication circuits, business networks, remote area communication, teleconferencing, national and regional TV networks, Satellite TV channels, messaging and data networks. The Search and Rescue Payload which is a new feature

added to the INSAT-2 system will instantaneously detect distress alerts over a vast region around India for taking appropriate rescue measures.

INSAT-2B, like INSAT-2A, is a complex and state-of-the-art Spacecraft, and has been entirely designed and built in India with minimal imported parts and components. I am sure that Members of the House would join me in conveying our deep appreciation and heartiest congratulations to all the scientists, engineers, technicians and other support staff of the Indian Space Research Organisation and the Department of Space for the great success that they have achieved in making available INSAT-2B for national services. The country can be justifiably proud of this magnificent achievement.

Cryogenic Rocket Engine Deal

I AM AWARE of the great concern felt by Hon'ble Members on the reports about the difficulty that has arisen in implementing the commitment of the Government of Russian Federation regarding the transfer of technology and production equipment under the Agreement on Cryogenic Stages and Technology Transfer signed in January 1991. I would like to take the House into confidence on this most important issue.

The primary goal of the Indian space programme from its very inception has been to use the immense potential of space science and technology for national development, particularly in the

vital areas of communication, meteorology and remote sensing of natural resources. The utilisation of Indian Remote Sensing satellites (IRS-IA & IB) and INSAT system of satellites stand testimony to this.

In order to achieve full potential of our space programme it was necessary that along with application projects and satellite segments, we acquire capability to have our own operational launch vehicles. Self-reliance in launch vehicles is most essential in providing continuity in operational space services.

While the solid and liquid propulsion technologies, developed by ISRO, have enabled our space scientists to proceed with the launch vehicles programme, the need for launching 2.5 ton class of satellites in geosynchronous transfer orbits by Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle requires the more efficient cryogenic propulsion system. The cryogenic technology is highly sophisticated and has taken over 10 years for development even in advanced nations. Glavkosmos of the then USSR, offered the technology transfer and cryogenic stages at most competitive rates. Other countries under consideration as a source of this technology were France and the US. Government decided to accept the Glavkosmos offer. An Agreement was signed in January 1991 with Glavkosmos at a cost of Rs. 235 crore for technology transfer along with supply of two units of cryogenic stages in a period of about 6 years. This contract has been making normal progress.

In May 1992, USA imposed embargo on ISRO and Glavkosmos for two years citing that the Agreement violates MTCR. Both the sides have consistently pointed out that this Agreement does not come under the purview of MTCR since the intended use of this cryogenic upper stage as a part of GSLV is only for launching Geosynchronous satellites for peaceful uses towards national development. There is also provision in the contract against transfer of this technology to any third country.

As a part of routine periodical consultations between M/S Glavkosmos and Indian Space Research Organisation, Secretary,

Department of Space and a team of officers from the Department visited Moscow in the early part of July 1993.

The Indian side during the course of their discussions reiterated :

- the long standing relation between the two countries in space
- MTCR concern is not relevant to cryogenic technology
- the technology transfer is the heart of the Agreement
- the provision in the Agreement on the non-transfer of technology to a third country.

Subsequently, the Chief of the Directorate of International Scientific and Technical Cooperation of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs handed over a nonpaper to the Indian Ambassador in Moscow on the 16th July in which it has been stated that in the context of unforeseen circumstances, Glavkosmos finds itself in a situation of not being able to fulfil its obligation further regarding the transfer of technology and production equipment under the Agreement of January 1991. The paper given to the Indian Ambassador invokes the *force majeure* clause of the January 1991 Agreement as the basis of Glavkosmos resiling from its contractual obligations. No other communication regarding the Agreement has been received. The Russian side, however, has expressed its readiness to hold further consultations with India in this matter.

The Government firmly believes in self-reliance in our launch vehicle programme and development of cryogenic technology is an essential part of it. Our space engineers have been simultaneously working to develop technologies for our own design of cryogenic engine. If the Agreement cannot be implemented, we are quite confident of our space scientists and engineers who would be able to develop our own technology.

We have had fruitful cooperation in peaceful application of space technology with several countries including the erstwhile Soviet Union, France and United States and now Russia. We would

like to continue such cooperation for mutual benefit where feasible. In any event I want to assure this House that we are committed to achieving self-reliance in high technology particularly in areas like space, which have a major bearing on our economic and social development.

Towards a Greener World

IT IS A privilege for me to be with you today. This first Ministerial Conference of the Forestry Forum for Developing Countries is a landmark in international cooperation on environmental protection. It is the first step forward by developing countries, underlining their resolve to set the agenda for international environmental negotiations. I am sure, the representatives of developing countries and international organisations here are going back with a better understanding of the problems, concerns and issues of the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests. It is this seed of common understanding which will sprout the tree of cooperation for a greener, fresher world.

Forests are an integral part of life in developing countries. Countries with ancient civilizations like India have always lived in harmony with nature giving every creature, animate or inanimate, plant or animal, a place of reverence in the terrestrial ordainment. Forests in India have formed an integral part of an individual's world as he progresses through life. It is to the forests that he retires for meditation and prayers in the twilight of his life. Forests were romanced in the folklore, often feared but never treated as irrelevant or merely a resource to exploit.

Developing countries are, and will remain for much of the early part of the next century, biomass-based economies. Imagine, what would be the impact on the climate if the millions of Indians living in rural areas switched from using twigs and fallen branches as fuel to burning fossil fuel! In India, about three quarters of the rural energy needs are met from biomass. Even looking to the uncertain future beyond fossil fuels, natural biomass, especially from forests, will be important for all of us and our future generations. Similarly, over half the energy used in agriculture comes from animal power. Biogas as a non-conventional energy sources also has a great potential. A great deal of the requirements of the village for nutrition, fodder, fibre, medicine etc., is met from forests.

These production and consumption patterns are sustainable and very different from the unsustainable lifestyles being adopted in the developed countries. One of our sages had cautioned, that “there is not enough wealth on this earth for the indulgent.” Forests are precious storehouses of wealth meeting so many needs of people in countries like ours. We have to revive the old respect, our forefathers had for them and treat them as living beings, that also require time to recoup their energies for sustained production.

The scale of human activity is, no doubt, affecting natural resources. It would be wrong only to blame the large populations in developing countries for the deterioration in environmental quality including deforestation. That of course does not mean that I am favouring deforestation. One has to take a balanced view when blame is to be apportioned. But I think we have left that stage behind where we were trying to apportion blame—the developed against the developing, the developing against the developed. I think we will have to take a comprehensive view of the matter and that is why it is more important today to motivate the people. Whatever the reason, they have been exploiting nature, exploiting forests, exploiting natural resources to an extent which cannot be sustainable. They have to be motivated both in the developed and the developing countries.

Mr Kamal Nath told you just now that he gets full protection from me. Yes, otherwise the Environment Minister in India would have become an endangered species. Hardly any meeting takes place where he is not pounced upon by equally patriotic, equally sincere, representatives of the State governments. They have their own insurmountable difficulties. I have worked at the State level and if I had been representing my State here in one of the conferences, I would be one of those to pounce on him. I have no doubt about that.

But then for the last twenty years, since Indira Gandhi gave us the first consciousness, awareness of the importance of environment, we have come a long way. We have understood these things. The people also understand these things. But in spite of the understanding, it is a question of their bread and butter. If Kamal Nath is facing a tough problem in almost every State in India, it is neither his fault nor the fault of the people of the State. We have built up our economies on destructive lines. We have enriched ourselves. The forest contractors for instance, do not fulfil needs but fill their pockets. Now, there is a great difference between the two as you can see. And, it is here that the State has to intervene and say enough is enough, you cannot deprive the coming generations of what they would have, in your greed to take everything that is available in your own generation. Now, this warning is more easily uttered than implemented. There are so many vested interests in this society, and all societies I believe, where this over-exploitation is the order of the day. You cannot get rich quick unless you over-exploit nature. I mean, that seems to be the rule. And, to the extent you are stopping it, you are really stepping on the toes of many people who perhaps can combine to destroy you, destroy the government, destroy the State and perhaps create anarchy in the country. So, we have to be careful but at the same time firm, which we are.

For the last two years we have been warding off attacks on the Government of India, on the Minister of Environment and still we have been able to carry on the message of what Agenda-21

means, what our former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi once adumbrated as a plan for the Planet Protection Fund. I see the reflection of that in Agenda-21. It may not be the same, verbatim, but then the idea is the same, that we have to have environment friendly technologies for the sustenance of this earth and we cannot over-exploit the resources that God has given us; therefore, we have to be careful. There is enough for everybody's needs, that is what Mahatma Gandhi said, but there is not enough for everybody's greed. Now that greed has to be the tendency, which one has to suppress, one has to control, restrain, and this is really the agenda for the future, the future generations, who have to pass on a sustainable developmental strategy to their successors when they come into power and run the state.

This is what we are doing. Therefore, this process that has started globally, I welcome this. I have always been an ardent advocate of this process because early or late, it has to begin and I think it has not begun one day too early. It has to be sustained, it has to be relentlessly followed up. It is estimated that a population of nearly 25 million lives in and around these forests depend on them for their sustenance. I am talking of India. As one who hails from what was once a richly forested area, I can vouch for the blessings the forests showered on people by providing them some of their daily needs, conserving soil and water and even preserving the micro-climate. Then I am reminded of those days, when just about a mile from my village the forests started. You don't find any forest these days. In fact, now we have to raise forest, where the forest has been completely removed during the last thirty, forty years. Now, we have to undertake reforestation programmes, afforestation programmes, not because there was no forest but because there was a forest and now there is none. So, it is a kind of undoing the wrong, undoing what has been done in these years and perhaps that would be the case in many other countries as well.

Forests in developing countries are no wildernesses or monoculture plantations but living ecosystems with a symbiotic relationship with the local population. Only in the case of the tiger,

I don't know what relationship they have with the local population. We seem to have very successfully increased the number of tigers in India. I am told the tiger also was becoming extinct and there was a lot of hue and cry about twenty years back or twenty-five years back. When Indiraji was Prime Minister, she gave a special fillip to the Project Tiger and now their number has proliferated to such an extent that quite often they become uninvited guests to many of our villages. So, this is one of the things. I am glad that you have now started a 'Forum for Tigers'. I hope it will take off and do useful work.

I am glad to see that these living issues are being recognised by the world community. This calls for cooperation among all the countries of the world as common problems of all humanity. We welcome the wide acceptance of the Convention on Biodiversity, especially by countries which initially had some reservations on it. Initiatives such as that of the G-15 countries which concretise South-South Cooperation are a commendable development whose success will spur greater global effort.

The earlier stress by some countries at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development on treating these community resources as globally shared resources has not found acceptance amongst the countries which have forests. Our delegation also played a role in creating an awareness on this. The focus of attention is quite rightly shifting to the recognition and the valuation of services provided by the forests. This process will form the basis of international cooperation between states which will be both mutually beneficial and lead to the greening of the earth.

The institutional arrangements that have been set up for continuing consultations are important for promoting South-South Cooperation. The Food and Agriculture Organisation is a ready-made apparatus which helps catalyse international action on forestry. I learn that this forum for developing countries arose from the initiative taken in FAO for bringing together countries dealing

with the National Forestry Action Plan. My Government will give all support to this initiative of the FFDC.

I wish to thank all the representatives from developing countries and observers from developed countries and from international organisations for coming to our country to participate in the first Ministerial Conference of the Forestry Forum for Developing Countries. These interactions will, no doubt, continue at the regional and international level. Forestry will also be discussed by the Commission on Sustainable Development in 1995. I understand the deliberations in the last two days have further clarified the Forest Principles and given insights into how they can be implemented. May I express the hope that we will all now concentrate on their implementation?

I am aware of the fact that in the years to come if we don't handle this issue properly with wisdom, the issue of environment itself can become a divisive issue. I have seen this very clearly. But this is the time when we have to see the signal and make it possible for environment to become an issue to unite the mankind and not to divide the mankind because once that happens we don't know where it will end. We are talking about the Third World War, that has receded fortunately. But we have to see that the very survival of the world, survival of the planet, is not really jeopardised by shortsighted, arrogant, unsympathetic policies on the part of countries who are running the globe right now. This is the real measure of what we are facing today and what we have to do in the coming years. I don't think I need to say anything more than this except to just flag this very important point by way of warning ourselves. I am not warning anybody else. We all have to warn ourselves, be warned.

Expanding the Reach of Information Technology

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to be here at the inauguration of IT-ASIA, 1993 which promises to be a major show-piece of India's achievements in the field of information technology. We are living today in the "Age of Information"—an era in which the relative strength of nations and of enterprises is determined less by differences in the physical wherewithal of power and more by access to and management of information. The tremendous pace of technological change over the past two decades has created a situation in which the effectiveness and efficiency of physical assets are being conditioned by the ability to anticipate and adapt rapidly to changing conditions.

India today stands at the cross-roads of history. The sweeping economic reforms carried out by the Government over the past two years, which shall be carried even further in the near future, are only at best enabling measures. They set the environment and the "rules of the game." Whether the country actually moves forward and becomes an economic giant or slides back and gets relegated to an also-ran depends upon the rapidity with which the tools of international competitiveness are adopted and utilised by Indian entrepreneurs to take advantage of the opportunities, that have been opened up and meet the challenges, that have been thrown up.

The highly protective nature of the Indian economy in the past had insulated the country to a large extent against the winds of change that were sweeping through the international markets, mainly as a result of the communication and informatics revolution.

Indian industrial and services sector were slow in the adoption to these new technologies. There were no compelling reasons

for our entrepreneurs to adopt competitive strategies which had been developed for meeting the needs of a buyer's market. But things are changing. As the Indian economy opens up and starts to get integrated into the global economy, our ways of doing business will have to change. In this process, the role of the information technology sector will be crucial.

The Government too will have to change its methods of functioning in order to keep up with the requirements of a liberalised economy. The policy changes, that have taken place have attracted the attention of foreign investors towards India. The conversion of our intentions into reality will depend upon the extent to which we are successful in changing the image of the country from a nightmare of bureaucratic red tape to a vision of efficiency and investor-friendliness. The multiplicity of forms, documents and approvals has to be reduced and streamlined. In a country of the size of India, this cannot be done without recourse to such information technology devices as 'wide area network' and 'electronic data interchange,' whereby a single form should be sufficient to provide all necessary information to every concerned government agency simultaneously. Decision making can then proceed in parallel, and not sequentially, as at present.

Such an administrative system requires not only new technologies, but also a change in attitudes, not only a change in attitudes but change in skills. People, who are just about two years from their retirement, it will be rather atrocious to ask them to learn anything new. You will have to change them over in orientation rather than the process of learning. At the other end where we have the recruitment going on, that is where the person's mental horizons and the capability to accept new things, to absorb new things for the coming 25 years, that will have to be built at this stage.

Now these are the things easily said, but when we really try taking steps to build them into the system, I am sure we are going to face lot of problems. We are facing them already but we are also able to plan and at the same time we will have to start facing them

so that five or six years from now, we are in a position to perfect our requirement processes to the stage where they become really resilient enough to accept anything new that is coming in the coming years. That in short is what we describe by the ability to manage change, to absorb change, to turn change to our advantage and not become a slave to change or a victim of change. Now, this is the difference. If you don't become the one, you will become the other. So, it is a question of mastering the change, it is a question of giving a direction to change the way you want it and not just yourself change as the direction really pushes you. So, this is what we have to do. From the government side, from the business side, from every side, this will have to be tackled. I don't expect this to be very easy but I don't expect it to prove impossible either. We have enough originality, enough adaptive skills in this country to make them possible.

Information technology is a vast field encompassing a wide range of technologies addressing different applications. The earlier distinction between the electronics information media, such as radio and television, data-processing system such as computers, and telecommunications, no longer holds good. Recent advances in technology and approaches have started to bring about a convergence of these fields or an integration of these fields where one is connected with the other. They all work like a team rather than an individual as a computer or a TV or a video or anything. We know all these things get integrated into single units.

The power and impact of the traditional media have been enhanced many times over by digital processing techniques. Similarly, mainframe computers are making way for distributed processing systems, which are a combination of computers and high speed communication systems. This process will soon reach its logical conclusion when multi-media systems, incorporating audio, video and data-processing interactivity, become affordable and eventually get linked up with personal communication systems. I am also apprehending that you will be flooded with so much information that the real question will be to pick and choose. Now

you don't know what to take, what not to take, what to reject, and day in and day out you will be rejecting hundred times more than what you will be expecting and in that also there could be human errors. And you can imagine the horrendous results of errors occurring in the adaptation, acceptance and rejection of data which is available to you. So, this again is going to be the new problem for which our young men and women would have to be trained. It is just like some kind of instinct being developed. You just know what is good for you, what is to be selected and you just know what is not to be selected. In 99 per cent cases you prove right. From 40 you go to 99 and that is the training you will have to receive, that is the learning you will have to do, our young men will have to do, on the job. I don't see any escape from this because when you get something in excess of what you can manage, there is always the question of rejection, there is the question of discarding, accepting these, questions are coming, and these questions themselves are intricate. Therefore, you can only learn on the job by committing a few mistakes, maybe, but then ultimately if you put—the young man or a woman puts his or her heart and soul in the job—I think, it will be easy ultimately to become so instinctively correct, accurate that you will hardly make a mistake. This is what happens in many walks of life. You don't really go to a dictionary to find out whether the spelling of every word is correct. I am giving you a very ordinary example. You remember it, you have read it somewhere, you are absolutely certain that this is correct and the other is not correct and in most cases you are right, maybe, in one or two cases you are wrong.

There are momentous developments and we need to adapt to them. It is, indeed, fortunate that despite the limitations of the user sectors, the information technology industry in India has progressed to the extent that it is state-of-the-art in many areas and is growing stronger everyday.

For a poor country where technologies have to be used not because of our economic position but because of our necessity, there is no warning which needs to be given. I have seen, we have

all seen, in recent years that there is craze for upgradation. Every year, everything gets upgraded. I think this has been carried to an extent which perhaps a poor country cannot stomach. I use one package of word processing. For years the upgrades are coming and when I look into the literature of what the upgrade means over what has been there in the past year, I find very little difference. Either it has become a fashion or a habit or a business tactics. I think we should be careful about these things. You skip four upgrades, maybe the fifth will be really useful to you. It will mean a real upgrade. Pardon me, saying so. This has happened to me, this is my own experience and I am sure, it is the experience of everyone of you. Between Upgrade-4 and 5, there is really nothing, just a few keys being changed and that is it. And that is being sold as a matter of fashion. 'Oh! you are still having Upgrade-4, I am having Upgrade-5.' Please be careful about these things. While the tool is good, don't become so tool-oriented that you loose your identity. You have the right to find out what the tool is like, is it good, is it bad or is it better or is it worse. It is your decision. The tool should depend on the version of the user and not of the manufacturer or someone who is really trying to fog it off on you. So, one has to be very careful in this subtle salesmanship that takes place most of the time.

Whenever people think of India in the context of information technology, there is a tendency to think only of our software capabilities. This is undoubtedly a matter of pride, but it is also somewhat limited. The technological capabilities of our computer hardware industry have improved significantly in the last few years. The time-lag between international technology levels and that prevailing in the Indian computer industry has shortened dramatically from over ten years or so in the 1970s to a few months or even days at present. It is a source of great pride that India was one of the first few countries in the world to unveil, I-486 based computers.

Now I am told, it is 586. I wanted to know what the difference is. While coming here, I was putting questions what is the difference between 486 and 586 apart from the speed and so on.

But still I am to get full information to make a judgement. I may even say that let me wait for 686 and carry on with 486 in the meanwhile. But I am sure, when you are convinced that there is something definitely of an advantage, definitely superior, definitely useful—it will be superior to some extent in the speed perhaps. But if it is superior in functions, functionally superior, and those parts of the functional superiority which you consider necessary for you could be in functions which don't make any difference to you as a user. But if they do make difference, a whole lot of difference, then you say yes 586 is definitely superior and more useful and I must go in for it. That is the final thing. The bottom line is: Do you want to go in for it and spend the extra money? So, these upgrades and later versions can confuse people to some extent.

This is only the start. The design capability of Indian hardware engineers is at par with the best in the world. In diverse fields of hardware design, such as parallel computers, transaction automation, networking and communication systems, Indian products are making their presence felt. It is only a matter of time before this capability is translated into a substantial global presence.

The experience of the parallel super computer development in the country is a case in point. This programme began in order to develop indigenous capability for meeting our strategic and developmental needs primarily in response to external pressures. Today, there are a number of independent efforts, which have become successful to a considerable degree and the internal competitive pressures are driving each developer to higher levels of excellence. With further efforts in developing application software for these super computers and greater marketing thrust, India can become an exporter in this highly competitive and technologically intensive field. There is considerable scope for alliance between the various governmental research agencies and the private sector in this endeavour.

Exports of software have grown steadily and rapidly for the past ten years at annual growth rates of over 45 per cent in dollar

terms. There does not appear to be any slackening in the growth performance, and software exports are targeted to cross the US \$ 1 billion mark by 1996-97. This is also no mean achievement. The sector is now firmly ensconced in the firmament of major software sources of the world. I am told that India has become the most preferred source for offshore software development for a number of foreign companies.

But success brings its own problems. Various hurdles are being placed in the way of our software exports activity in some of the major markets. Changes in visa requirements and taxation treatment are putting pressure on the on-site software development activities of Indian software companies. The more pressures are put on you, I come to the conclusion that you are more successful. That's all, otherwise if you are not succeeding no one will put any pressure on you. You are succeeding, other people don't want to succeed, maybe they can't compete with you. So, it is a question of their using something else to put you down. This doesn't work. I mean, we have seen in many other fields, this has not worked; maybe for one year it will work, for six months it will work, later on they will have to give up this chase. The industry is, however, responding by diversifying markets to Europe and South-East Asia and placing emphasis on offshore software development.

The Government is committed to providing the policy and infrastructural support that the industry requires. A number of policy initiatives have been taken over the past two years in order to give the proper incentives for the growth of the information technology sector in the country. Efforts are currently underway to provide the much-needed infrastructural requirements, in particular high-speed international data communication links, which have proved to be bottlenecks in the past.

The true strength of the Indian information technology sector will really come into focus when the various sub-segments, such as, hardware, software and telecommunications combine to

provide total solutions for the needs of the users. This day is not far off, as is evinced by the displays exhibited here.

We are hopeful that this thing will happen.

Science and Technology for Happiness of the Society

I AM DELIGHTED to be here with the members of the Indian Science Congress Association in this historic city, a city of considerable architectural and scenic attraction. "Science in India : Excellence and Accountability" is a relevant theme and what I have to say, I trust, bears upon the theme that you have so carefully chosen and which you will deliberate upon.

Investigating the natural world and discovering its laws has been fundamental to human activity. The history of science and its contributions to understanding nature constitutes an important part of man's perennial quest for enlightenment. Naturally, every age registered its own milestones in the unending journey for gaining knowledge and seeking more knowledge. Science and technology thus became essential ingredients of every civilization, more so in modern times. All the countries of the world avidly cultivate and actively support scientific endeavours. However, the questions that are raised by a given society, at a given stage of its development, and the insights it develops, derive from much wider priorities and from the role that science and technology is expected to play in that society at that time. I recall one of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's perceptive statements, "the progress of science and its offspring technology is changing the way man thinks of himself and the world."

While at no time, will anyone deny the basic values of scientific pursuits, and the need for the state to invest in them, it is pertinent to encourage a debate and ask questions, such as how can science and technology's capabilities contribute to economic growth ! I focus on the issue of economic growth because it is a relevant question to raise at this juncture, when we want to accelerate economic progress and generate more wealth, in order to ensure the well-being and the welfare of our people.

Beginning in the later half of the nineteenth century, growth of scientific knowledge and the rise of technology have been a factor in the scheme that enabled the market economies of the Western nations achieve unprecedented prosperity. More recently, the growth in the economic prosperity of some of the Eastern countries, notably Japan, has been phenomenal and application of technology can be seen to have played a seminal role.

The question that arises in my mind, and should also concern all of you, of the community of scientists, is why has the high level of scientific and technological capability that we have established in our country not apparently impinged upon economic growth to the same extent? A distinction is often made between science on the one hand and technology on the other; some analysts seem to think that India has excellent accomplishments in science but, technology and engineering, which have a more direct influence on economic activities, have not been equally strong. Others suggest that countries like India excelled in philosophy and classical thought but were not adept at technology. We have to contend with these notions.

While the world recognises our strength in science and scholarship, let me point out that technology is not alien to our genius, neither now nor in the past.

When I want to look for technology of the past, I do not have to go far, Rajasthan and the city of Jaipur, where we have assembled for the Science Congress are themselves monuments of technological glory.

The impulse to observe the universe and explore its regularities drove Sawai Jai Singh to build huge observatories during early 18th century. The Jaipur Astronomical Observatory, with a variety of massive civil constructions performing as instruments is a testimony to the technical spirit of the times. You will find similar constructions in Samarkand in the days of Uluf Baig and there was a very close correspondence and friendship between Maharaja Jai Singh and Uluf Baig who was the King of Samarkand in those days. These two king scientists, or scientist-kings really added to the knowledge of astronomy to a very large extent in those days. This is not just a bygone tradition. Not far from Rajasthan, Indian radio astronomers are presently building a radio telescope—the giant meter wave radio telescope—which, I am told, would be one of the most powerful of its kind in the world. The 45-metre diameter dishes are a product of distinctive Indian design, and use wire mesh instead of solid metal, thus not only bringing down their cost considerably but reflecting our ability for adaptation.

The famed ‘buried channels’ in several parts of Rajasthan were a superb engineering feat and catered for efficient water management. It is just possible that careful identification and mapping of the palaeo channels in the region using modern techniques such as remote sensing could point to new ground water sources. When we talk in our texts about Saraswati, the river Saraswati, being *Antar-Vahini*, one can see that in the old days people could think of water existing underground not coming up on the surface and still flowing underground, and that is why, it is called *Antar-Vahini*. It is a question of their own intuition. Maybe, they did not have all the gadgets to find out what it is all about. But the intuition itself was so strong and so unerring. This is a part of our tradition. And we are so good at remote sensing today that the Indian Remote Sensing Satellite I-C will have a ground resolution better than 10 metres matching contemporary world technology.

While the palaces like the Amber Palace are magnificent examples of Rajput architecture of post-Moghul period, the use of

locally available quartzite, with coating of lime mortar, as a building material, yielded an end-product of exquisite textural beauty and indeed marked a revolution in building construction. Closer to our times, I have come across numerous examples of innovation in building materials and I know of the country-wide drive to develop, manufacture and use substitutes for wood in building construction.

As stated in *Rasaratnakar*, the first quantity of zinc metal ever to be distilled by man was in Zawar in Rajasthan around 50 B.C. It is gratifying to note that while zinc was a scientific curiosity in the Western world as late as 300 years ago, zinc had been produced on an industrial scale in India 2000 years ago. The ancient zinc furnaces at Zawar and copper smelting at Khetri testify to our metallurgical skills. Rajasthan today accounts for the entire country's output of zinc concentrate.

I could add that my own village in a rather remote part of Andhra Pradesh had a very hoary tradition of smelting iron. There is a hill whose name is 'Iron-Stone Hill'—stone containing iron—this is how they call it. And in my own young days when I was a child of five or six maybe ten, I saw the *bhattees* myself. Now they are no longer there. Houses have come up and no one knows that this great tradition was there in the village. I feel sometimes very sad that what I saw with my own eyes in my young days, is no longer seen in the village. People have become unscientific, in the sense that they have taken to other professions. No one has continued that great tradition, which for all I know must have existed for hundreds of years.

I draw your attention to these noteworthy examples to emphasize that technology and engineering are as much a part of our heritage as art and literature or mathematics and medicine. I mentioned the related current developments so that, as you will discuss 'Excellence in Science' in this Congress, inspiration can come not only from the past but the present as well.

It is true that there have been quiescent periods for Indian technology, especially during the centuries that saw the Western

world experience the benefits of the Industrial Revolution. However, since independence, there has been substantial progress.

India is a top ranking country today in the field of basic research and our successes in technology development have not been insignificant either. We are a country known to be self-sufficient in food and are leading producers of a number of agricultural commodities. We have demonstrated our capability in building nuclear reactors, communication and remote sensing satellites and guided missiles, just to mention a few advanced technology systems. The drug and pharmaceutical industry which had a meagre turnover of about Rs. 10 crore in 1947 has grown 600 fold to reach a turnover of the level of about Rs. 6000 crore today. In 1947 India's GNP was about Rs. 8000 crore, there were just 20 universities and about 60 scientific societies and industry was rudimentary. Today, the GNP is in excess of Rs. 6,00,000 crore, we have 200 universities and about 400 national laboratories with a sizeable industrial base as well as 1200 in-house Research and Development institutions of the industry. By any standards, this progress is quite remarkable.

While these are heartening developments, I am not sure that we are in a position to say that science and technology in India has, as in the developed world, made an equivalent impact upon the national economic scene.

The question that I had raised as I began this address, about science and technology capability and its relation to economic progress, still remains to be adequately answered. How are we to make sure of this connection? Where do we see the science and technology potential in the context of the economic reform policies that the Government has embarked upon?

Let us, for example, look at the composition of India's exports. Large percentages of our exports are accounted for, by items like textiles and garments, gems and jewellery, leather, agriculture and allied products. While engineering goods, chemi-

cals and allied items do figure, I dare say that there is no adequate manifestation of the high science and technology capability that we have established in the country in its exports basket. Let me, therefore, urge that Research and Development intensity and technology intensity of our exports should rapidly be enhanced. I am sure that this would be an attractive goal for the indigenous science and technology community. Once you accept this as a worthwhile goal, I mean Research and Development intensive and technology intensive exports, it is for you to undertake a systematic and comprehensive exercise to determine areas of our comparative advantage.

While I do not propose to offer concrete subject areas in this forum, there are clear pointers for you to consider. Whereas the agricultural base in our country produces about Rs. 50,000 crore worth of primary agricultural products in terms of grains, vegetables, fruits, the production of value added products remains far below the potential. The downstream sectors like food processing machinery and packaging clearly need technology inputs and the scope there is obviously vast. The same principle is applicable whether it is leather or textiles or mineral based value added products. Small-scale industry, employing over twelve and a half million people and yielding 40 per cent of the country's industrial output, and accounting for a third of the total exports, will undoubtedly benefit markedly from access to Research and Development and this was the sole intention of the reforms that we brought in the small-scale sector, although they have been maligned and misunderstood time and again. The idea was that this sector should benefit by the Research and Development progress that the country is making and the Research and Development input that is available from anywhere in the world and I am glad to say that despite disinformation, despite maligning, the small-scale sector during the last two years or more has made giant strides. I am not saying that it is perfect. But then, it has been progressing in the right direction and the Research and Development inputs in the small-scale sector today are quite remarkable when compared to what they had done two, or two and a half years ago. The way ahead requires you to

be selective and to determine where we can be competitive. I would like to see the Research and Development and technology intensity in exports to register a quantum jump in India's export product profile during the coming years and I know this can be achieved through the involvement of the brilliant science and technology community of our country.

Worries have been expressed by scientists and certain sectors of trade that indigenous Research and Development may be jeopardised as consequence of the recently concluded GATT negotiations. While GATT addresses several issues, the more important areas impacted by Science and Technology and Research and Development are : (i) Textiles and Clothing, (ii) Agriculture, (iii) Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and (iv) Services, including Research and Development Services. In everyone of the above sectors, India can clearly delineate areas of significant opportunities. In doing so, we have to tune our choices to suit our characteristics. India is a large country with substantial natural resources and a massive agricultural base and is enormously endowed in terms of biodiversity, climate diversity and skilled manpower. These strengths of the country should now be pooled and harnessed to address indentified areas of opportunities. It is clear to me that Science and Technology and Research and Development will be of paramount importance in the post-GATT liberalised environment. Let us understand this. Most manufactured goods in the country will not only need to meet quality specifications of the international market but shall have to compete in terms of costs. India with her vast reservoir of science and technology personnel and comparatively lower manpower costs is entirely capable of meeting this challenge through appropriate Research and Development inputs. GATT ensures further opening up of national economies and our science and technology specialists and industry leaders will have an enlarged arena to play their part. This is why I placed before you the export possibilities.

The phenomenon of science and technology having fuelled economic gains in the prosperous nations has been referred to. In

this context, I took you through a discussion on how science and technology can perform for triggering economic dividends. In comparing the West or Japan with ourselves, it clearly emerges that industry and industrial Research and Development have played a dominant part in those countries. This is yet to happen in India. In various science and technology endeavours that I outlined, industry should become an active partner. All along, the Government of India have invested in Research and Development. The private industry's contribution has accounted so far for less than 15 per cent of our country's total Research and Development expenditure. This picture should substantially change. Furthermore, industry should come forward to define the goal areas and set targets which, I am absolutely certain, the science and technology community will be quite prepared to pick up and work for. With foresight on the part of industrialists and scientists, whose entrepreneurial skills and dynamism have never been in question, even in terms of world standards, India can march forward in the new competitive environment.

In the economic history of the world, trade in primary commodities was the first crossing of national boundaries. Services, manufactures, professionals and licence production have all followed suit. With the advent of multinationals, cross-border investments began to spread. More recently, and in particular in the new economic and post-GATT scenario, I foresee rapid expansion in the way Research and Development will cross national boundaries. India must be prepared to profit from this situation as Research and Development costs in India would be one-fifth to one-fiftieth of the costs abroad depending upon the field. At the same time I should here warn our scientists and industrialists that while there is a great possibility of technology crossing international borders more easily than before, there is also the possibility of technology being withheld from countries like India by other countries where they feel that by the use of this technology India will become so powerful or so progressive that perhaps it will go beyond them. This is also going to happen. There is a kind of protectionism built into liberalisation. All kinds of contradictory trends are developing. One has to be extremely careful in finding

one's way forward in post-GATT period. But I am sure that the genius of India, the genius of the Indian economists, scientists and the people in general will be able to pass through all these difficulties and come out successfully. Not just Research and Development costs alone, but also look at our wide-ranging advantages—(i) high science and technology calibre in a wide spectrum of fields, (ii) substantial Research and Development infrastructure and capabilities, (iii) extensive test facilities that meet world standards, (iv) unique proficiency in knowledge-based inputs, (v) language skills, (vi) worldwide presence of Indian scientists. The above features constitute a powerful combination for launching joint Research and Development with other countries.

During the early history of several technology devices, there was considerable transnational interaction and activity. This is true of the radio or the synthetic fibres. National innovation systems became confined, for obvious reasons, as more and more developments occurred that yielded massive financial gains. This situation is changing as costs of Research and Development support for any single nation are rapidly increasing. Currently, transnational programmes of Research and Development support have emerged in the post-GATT regime, which is expected to witness an erosion of national borders as a consequence of internationalisation of business, innovation and technological development should be expected also to become a multi-country operation with the exception of what was contained in the warning, which I just said, where deliberately technology is withheld from crossing a certain boundary to go into a certain country. With the unique and several advantages that India possesses the science and technology community can, indeed, look forward to a widening of the Research and Development base.

If India can muster her science and technology strength, fully exploit the advantages outlined above as well as take into account the ease with which business can be carried out in our country, India should emerge as an optimal choice in this part of the world for extensive joint Research and Development, multiple joint

technology ventures and significant joint investments for other countries.

In all of the above discussions, I had implied not only national and industrial laboratories but also the universities in my terminology of the science and technology system. In the country's vast educational sector, a number of academic institutions are involved in higher technical education and research. However, I wonder, if there is an organic linkage between the educational system, the laboratories and the industry. If we are meaning to activate science and technology for industrial Research and Development and Technology, needless to add, we cannot do without skilled science and technology manpower of high quality in large numbers. This matter was prominently included in the New Education Policy of 1986. I am not quite aware how much it has been acted upon. But the New Education Policy attaches great importance to the linkage between the universities, the industry and the laboratories.

Presently the entire support structure for university education, practically, comes from the Government. Our industry has to come forward and invest in this sector as well as ensure involvement of high quality manpower in programmes of their interest. The bridges between these components, universities, laboratories and industry have to be built and buttressed, if we have to become a technologically strong nation. The industry, knowing its specific interests, has an essential and key role in the process of developing partnerships and strengthening linkages for clearly defined and tightly scheduled programmes. Apart from fiscal incentives to industry announced recently, Government would be most willing to support the growth of such joint efforts in every way possible.

You mention accountability. People have placed considerable faith in the potential of science and technology for national development and scientists are expected to find solutions to a wide spectrum of problems. Out of this spectrum, it so happens that the attention on problems of the rural areas and those concerning

poverty alleviation, has, on the whole, been less than what was warranted. I had occasion to dwell on this aspect in my address to this Body at Baroda. I would be happy to know what exactly has happened since I made that appeal. Any appreciable achievement in pursuance of that appeal would, in my view, be taken as a good response to the dictates of accountability. Your accountability is in reality to the society. Government comes in mainly on behalf of the society, answerable to Parliament which reflects the society. Thus your accountability and Government's answerability emanate from the same source namely, the people of India. Neither can be wished away. I am quite conscious of the various limitations in the face of which our scientists have functioned and yet succeeded in bringing name and fame to the country. I shall not judge the performance of scientists in terms of conventional yardsticks that are used to assess productivity. I shall leave accountability, in the case of such valued and creative professionals as scientists, to their own methods of judgement. But one thing is very clear to me as a layman, there can be no judgement according to which concrete results are totally ignored. I have not come across any such assessment or any such evaluation where you don't require any results at all and still say this is a wonderful job you have done. This is not going to be possible. Suffice for me to quote a scientist in this respect and recall what Professor Chandrashekhar had to say: "One's place in science, as posterity will duly assign, depends largely on one's continuous exertion, at the edge of one's ability."

I have dwelt at length on science, technology, trade and the economy. I have deliberately done so because it is so important in the present context. However, this should not be taken to imply that I see this as the only or as a limited goal for science. As has been pointed out, "scientific activity is a collective endeavour which requires, to exist, a shared set of cultural values, of social commitments of institutions... It is a social enterprise." We should never lose sight of this key role for science. The range of influence of science extends not only to economic but also to social and cultural development. Rajiv Gandhi used to say, "the difference between a backward area and a developed area lies in the difference

in technology that the inhabitants use in their day-to-day lives.” The corollary is that, if we have to alter the standard of living among the poor and in the rural areas we should put in more and more science and technology into our rural areas, better technology for their improved living and better technology for the professions of our poor people. If I emphasized economic prosperity, my perception was that, with generation of wealth, quality of life of our people will also be enhanced. The point is that without prosperity, without economic uplift, there can be no progress. With economic uplift, something more is needed to make people happy, to make people really prosperous.

Let me also set the record straight by stating that technology and economics in development should be handled alongside an appreciation of our own cultural heritage. It is clear to me, and must be so to every Indian, that we are inheritors of an unparalleled societal strength that has survived varied vicissitudes over the millennia. I do not have to dwell on the enormous storehouse of wisdom that is contained in the depths of our ancient intellectual outpourings. Our approach to development, if tinged with the ennobling principles of selfless service that our ancient texts enjoin us to practise, can prove to be a unique operation. It is essential to blend technological and economic approach to development with the best of what is available in our own heritage and experience. Pursuit of prosperity for the sake of prosperity is an empty goal. Even taking it as a goal, prosperity should mean prosperity for all and not for some at the expense of the rest. This itself will take a long time and a herculean effort to achieve. As we are finding for the last forty or forty-five years, we are able to create wealth but in creating the proper distributive justice, the atmosphere that we have been able to create is not adequate and we have to do a lot more and that is why, you have social upheavals of the day in a different form. But at the root of all, this is that what we have really created maybe wealth but what we really distributed is something which is not as based on justice and equity as this country would need. However, when achieved, one should look for happiness, individual and collective, as the most reasonable and natural pur-

pose of this achievement. You have prosperity not for the sake of prosperity alone and then you have this achievement that with the increase of wealth, the people are more and more satisfied. If that is not there, then the increase of wealth also becomes empty. The role of science and technology, in my view, needs to be delineated in this framework. One should look for happiness, individual and collective as the most reasonable and natural purpose of this achievement, which should be the sole aim or at least the main aim of our scientific and technological endeavours. I believe that this framework will be sufficient to work on for a long time to come.

I have placed before you, friends, what I think would be needed in a complex and at the same time ancient country like India, taking her society, taking the vicissitudes of long periods for which we have made progress and longer periods for which we have stagnated. Now such a chequered history, taking all these things into account, today what I have tried to delineate is what I think science and technology should do and perhaps to an extent should not do in future. This is what I have tried to do, which is for your consideration and deliberation. If what I had appealed in Baroda and what I am appealing now would have some concrete result in the near future, I shall consider my effort amply rewarded.

Scientists and Philosophers Should Boost Morale of the People

THE COMBINATION OF science and technology on one side and philosophy and literature on the other has been a part of Indian thought for thousands of years. The dichotomy, the separation, is only for convenience and this is how it should be. So, I welcome this combination of giving awards—one to a scientist and one to a philosopher or a literary personality—and I would like to congratulate both of them. It has not been possible to hear them out. They were talking under very great constraint, some one nagging them from behind. This is not done to scholars and scientists. I am sorry about it. We have not treated them well. I would have had the occasion to talk to them, to hear them out, to understand them, particularly when a scientist says that the liberalisation programme and the integration of Indian economy with world economy means nothing if it is not accompanied by a similar integration of science and technology here with the science and technology that is available anywhere in the world, then I feel very happy that something which we started two and a half years ago stands corroborated, stands vindicated.

Now, we have also embarked on the integration on the trade side by the signing of the GATT. We are right now under attack for doing that. But with the cooperation, with the corroboration of scientists and economists, we would certainly ward off these attacks. But the point is that there cannot be any partial integration, it has to be total. And, if it has to be total, we have to show our talent as being second to none. Now, that is the question. Our people have gone abroad, they are working there. For decades and decades they have brought laurels to the countries where they are working. But here in the country we seem to be diffident. This diffidence has to go.

Speech on the occasion of the presentation of G.D. Birla Award 1993, New Delhi,
18 April 1994

Prof Joshi the other day said the CSIR laboratories in this country have come up with not only original ideas, but original work in several fields of activity in the industrial sector. I asked Dr Joshi, to give me a list. The list has come only yesterday to me. I am happy. This contains a lot of things that I perhaps as a layman may not completely understand but I feel the utility of the items in that list—the items of discovery, the items of new ideas floated; new means, absolutely new, new for the whole world not just for India, this is what we have done in our laboratories. Now, the question is how do the laboratory discoveries come into the open, they get transformed into technology. Science is there. Technology has to be fashioned out of that science which means money, which means capital, which means organisation. Now, these are the things that are waiting to be done. The original spark is already there and it is going to grow. Now, are we planning the future of India on the assumption that we are going to be backward all the time. Even if you want to do it, there is no proof for it. The proof is otherwise. Your people have shown their talent, their eminence in every field—science, art, philosophy. You have no right to put them under the lid and say you shall be backward, you shall remain backward all the time and the national planning will be based on the fact that you are going to be backward. We are afraid of patents, we are afraid of competition, we are afraid of everything. This will not do.

What is needed in the new context of integration is a new morale, a high morale, on the part of everyone in this country which is transmitted to the last person. If the people themselves are not given the morale that is needed, then neither scientist can help nor the person working behind the scenes or behind the walls of the laboratory can help. So, it has to go there. What is happening today is just to demoralise the last person, the common man in this country, I am sorry to say. This is not all. We will have to get the message of Dr Mashelkar to the common man. He has to go and talk to them. You have nothing to be afraid of. I am here to help you. I am here to help our country and bring the name of this country on par with any other country. These scientists will have to speak up.

There is no other way. If I speak they will take me as a politician and you know what it is. If he speaks then there is a difference. If Prof Raghuvansh speaks there is a difference because in that circle all over the world, there are so many questions being raised on the origins. It is not just what you are seeing on the surface. After the cold war has ended, the enquiry of man in scholastic circles has completely changed in complexion and we see that we are on par with any process of enquiry into the origins of man, the origins of society. We have for each one of these things, our texts which have shown the way. I do not say they have given all the answers, but then they have given clues for finding the answers and that is what it is, that is how science or philosophy both progress; nobody finds the final answer, nobody gives you the final answers. If any one thinks he is giving the final answers doesn't have the answers. So, this is how it is. The enquiry goes on. It is an unending process of human life and, therefore, in this unending process these scientists, these philosophers have a place, a definite place, and that place should be to boost the morale of the people by telling them the facts. They need not tell things that are not true. Let them tell the truth, the morale of the people will go up and that is what we really want today.

Search for an Indigenous Environmental Solution

I WELCOME YOU all to this meeting being held for the first time after the constitution of the Council. This Council is very broad-based and has in it, some of the best brains in our country. Represented on this Council, are men and women who have hands—on experience of the problems of environment and development. We depend

upon your wisdom to guide the Government in its efforts at ensuring the kind and speed of development, that the country needs while at the same time also ensuring its quality—a quality, that does not needlessly challenge and destroy nature. The quality of life of large masses of our people has been seriously affected by crippling poverty. Speedy economic growth including rapid industrialisation is, therefore, an urgent imperative. But, as I had pointed out on some other occasion, the race for development should not be a race for destruction. We have to strike a manageable balance between development and the preservation of the environment, in the interest of environment as well as in the interest of development.

Industrialised nations realised the importance of environment only when they found that environmental degradation affected their quality of life and came in the way of the productivity of the industrial establishments. That was when water bodies became so polluted that fish could not survive and human beings could not use the water either for drinking or for bathing and air became so impure that health of industrial workers suffered, reducing their productivity. In short, they realised that harmony and not confrontation, is what works with nature.

Now they seem to have opened their eyes. For us, in India, environmental knowledge did not come through this route. Our ancient sages had a farsighted vision of the relationship between man and nature which, over thousands of years, got ingrained in our day-to-day attitudes. We believe in the harmony between human beings and environment. Indian thought has always emphasized discipline on the part of human beings to bring about the desired balance between human activities and environmental conservation. On the other hand, the Western world, when faced with the problems of environment, looked for technical options to solve them. In our ethos, the need for the balance between man's needs and nature's rights, arose from our humble realisation that human life is only a single segment of the total scheme of the Creator's purpose.

The ancient Indian thought was the outcome of a way of life which was possible at a time when the population was very small, spread out in numerous far flung villages of this vast subcontinent and natural resources were plenty. But today we are confronted with a huge population, and a large portion of it is living in conditions of acute poverty. As a nation, our primary aim is to give every Indian, a life in which his basic needs are satisfied. Industrialisation is an important means of achieving rapid economic growth. In this process, we also find ourselves in the same position as the industrialised West. If we have to achieve the objective of industrialisation without damage to environment, we will have to look for solutions both in terms of modern technology as well as our ancient wisdom of living in harmony with nature.

This is one subject. I think there is not much difference between the levels of achievement of the developed and the developing world. The only achievement that the developed world has made so far is to cause damage to nature in their industrialisation process. Now they are realising that what they have done was wrong and, therefore, they will have to think of environment-friendly technologies all over again. So they have come back to square one. We have to be at that square one. So, except a futile exercise in damaging nature, they don't have anything much to their credit as of today. And that is why we can talk to them in terms of equality. We have been doing it without any contradiction. No one has said that they have anything better than we have. We have a much better culture, much better way of life, handed to us for generations, which of course in the middle ages, we have jettisoned for various reasons particularly of poverty, helplessness, but on the other hand, if we have despoiled nature for our genuine needs, they have despoiled nature for their greed, in the process of industrialisation. So, we both have been unkind to nature. The time has come when we have to reverse this trend. Both of us have to reverse this trend and this is where the entire dispute or, let us call it, the difference of opinion arises. We have gone through this mill for the last two-three years. We have found in the first stage, the developing countries blaming the developed countries and in turn

the developed countries blaming the developing countries. When both understood that the blame is more or less balanced, then they started thinking of remedies. Here also, we have a lot of difference. They have attained a standard of life, which they don't want to scale down. They want to put it where it is. I am being very brief because there are lots of ramifications in this and they also want us to come a little above, where we are. It reflects the hiatus between them and us and is sought to be perpetuated in the name of environment. We have said very clearly that our developmental effort will go on.

We don't have technology of the future. So we said why don't you come together and do something about it? Why do you have to commercialise this? You may have laboratories, you may have better facilities, but if we don't have the money to buy your technology, the result is the same. More than three-fourth of the world will be despoiled, and we will go on damaging nature as we have done. You may stop but we cannot stop because, we cannot buy your technology. Therefore, this is something like a three-legged race. You cannot run while we are walking, if we run—both have to run, if we walk—both have to walk, if you sit—both have to sit. This is how we have been tied up with the developed world and perhaps this is a singular example where this is happening. In no other case, this tie up is so effective as it is in the case of environment. In all other matters they are running far far ahead, leaving us far far behind, this has happened and perhaps this will happen again. But when it comes to the constraints of environment, all that running would have to come to a grinding halt. This is in a way good, this is a chance for the entire world to survive together as one unit. This is the only way of survival. Survival means co-survival in this case. And this is what, I think, has been admitted on all hands. But old habits, old attitudes do not go away overnight. We still have to grapple with these problems. In every conference, there is a lot of haggling, there is a lot of bargaining, what we have to do !

Mrs Indira Gandhi, 22 years ago, had raised this question. Everyone thought that she was talking something which did not

make much sense in those days. Now, everyone remembers her. If the spoiling of nature was wisdom ever, we had a wrong notion of wisdom, we have now discovered the right notion of wisdom which has very clearly been brought out in our old texts. But then the texts have been forgotten. Those who wrote the texts are no longer there. Now we have to write a text, which is understood by the generation of today and not only understood but acted upon. It is not an easy task.

At every step we find that our major developmental requirements are coming into conflict with environmental requirements. In the National Development Council, something or the other connected with the environment is raised. Earlier it used to be only the Finance Department. Now the odium is being shared by another department, another ministry. So the Finance people seem to be a little happy about it. So these are not impediments. These are necessary in the interest of wholesome and holistic progress of the planet of the whole of humankind. So, once this is understood, we will have to tell the people. Ultimately it is the people to whom we have to answer and if it is not possible, if a particular project results in greater damage than benefit in the long run, someone has the courage to tell them so and take a decision not to go ahead with the project, go ahead with something else, some alternative which gives them same benefit or similar benefit but does not despoil nature.

The process of development has become very choosy these days, very selective. It is not just doing more of the same that we have been doing and this distinction of environment has come at the right moment so that we will not hurtle along any more on the path of destruction. Since our industrialisation started late, we still do not have the burden of clearing up the heap of polluted wastes accumulated over the years as in many developed countries. If we are careful, we can avoid such a burden. It is in this context that Impact Assessment procedures for locating industries are relevant. The second advantage is our own cultural and historical respect for environment, which we should apply in building new concepts of

conservation and pollution prevention, in the industrial and other sectors. Industrial units must use these inherent advantages while preparing their Environment Management Plans.

We are finding some difficulties in this assessment and so on. People don't know what are being assessed, how the assessment is being made and in their ignorance, in our becoming a little higher-technical, we are getting into difficulties with the people. I think this should be avoided. There should be some way of finding a solution to every problem by mutual discussion and not by mutual incrimination. Kamal Nath gets nothing by being difficult. Anyone in his place would be equally difficult, if not more. Because that is what he is there for. The Ministry of Environment looks like an obstructionist Ministry. But it has to perform its duty of reminding of the fact that there is a tomorrow and today itself does not end all time. So this is essentially their job.

One of our prime considerations has to be low-cost technologies. Take the case of sanitation. Even in the developed countries, the urban administrations find it difficult to build and maintain sewage systems. In a country like France 40 per cent of municipal wastes are released untreated. In our country we would be able to provide sanitation facilities to our villages and smaller towns only if they become inexpensive. Some good work has been done by certain social activists in this field, the *Sulabh* effort, for example. Our scientists should work to evolve techniques for treating wastes in the cheapest ways possible.

There is another reason why our pollution control efforts have to be cost effective. All pollution control becomes part of the manufacturing process and the cost of pollution abatement becomes part of the manufacturing cost. In the light of our present effort to open up our economy to global competition, it is imperative that our products are competitive in the international market. I cannot over-emphasize the point that we have to look for our own indigenous environmental solutions, if this objective is to be achieved. Your advice would be most valuable here.

At this stage, I do not wish to go into details. Since you are going to discuss them. Forestry however deserves attention. Forestry is an area where our efforts should not merely be to conserve, but to expand. I am happy to note that the scheme of joint forest management that we have embarked upon is showing encouraging results. This is our own innovation and it has shown its strength. The fact that satellite imagery shows that for three consecutive years there has been a consistent net increase in the green cover of the country is a matter of satisfaction. We should expand this effort in a very big way, remembering at the same time certain special rights the poorest of the poor, like the tribals, have to forest resources.

I hope that your deliberations would cover whatever I have raised and much more, and this being the first meeting, I leave it to your discussions and we look forward to your recommendations, your guidelines after the discussions are over.

IV
Education, Culture
and Sports

Cultivating a Spirit of Goodwill among the Youth

IT IS A matter of great delight for all of us that we are celebrating Rajivji's birthday as Sadbhavana Divas. It is not only a matter of nomenclature. There lies a big difference. Rajivji spread the spirit of Sadbhavana—the goodwill and harmony, in the country and he always craved for it. He always talked about the unity and harmony in the country. Therefore, we have decided to celebrate his anniversary as Sadbhavana Divas—the day of goodwill towards all.

History has seen a number of nations being established and disintegrated. Nations built by force, by the might of the sword, are transient and tend to disintegrate when the might of the sword gets weaker.

Ours, is not such a nation. Indian society is five thousand years old. Our culture is five thousand years old. Its flow has remained uninterrupted. The only reason for this is that it is based on goodwill and harmony. It has not been established by force, by the fear of the gun or the bomb. Attempts were never made to establish this nation on such foundations. Rajivji understood this dominant underlying idea of this society quite early. He frequently called upon the people to follow the path of goodwill and harmony. He, himself, undertook the Sadbhavana *Yatra*—the tour for national harmony. He toured the length and breadth of this land. Whenever he went on this *Yatra*, he was welcomed by the teeming millions. He stirred the hearts of the people and this evoked tremendous response all over the country.

I would like to request you to maintain this goodwill and for this goodwill, it is essential that it is inculcated right from the childhood, right from the cradle. It has to be cultivated. It cannot be taught in schools and colleges. There cannot be any degrees or examinations

for it. But it is one which can change the nature, the attitude of people and it has to be inculcated from very early age. Therefore, Rajivji laid great emphasis on the youth programmes, sports etc. The emphasis on these was not simply because that such programmes will help us get more medals and prizes in sports or we will get international recognition, but because these programmes will eventually help develop the spirit of goodwill and harmony among our young boys and girls. This goodwill is invaluable, it can not be measured in monetary terms. Therefore, he made a composite ministry giving due weightage that all these important things should find proper place in it. It was named as Ministry of Human Resource Development. When the Ministry was named, nobody knew what was it all about. We know about water resources, mineral resources; but what are human resources? Many said—Are you equating human beings with water and minerals? Are you trying to make human beings as inanimate objects? Rajivji told that this was not the truth. In fact human resources are most precious, most important than all other resources that this country has. With this definition in mind, he gave a direction to all the activities of sports, culture, etc. and made an integrated ministry, which included all these.

I am very happy to see that the small seedling planted by Rajivji has now grown into a big tree. The importance of the concept of human resources is now being realised not only in India but also outside. I remember that when this Ministry was formed, its charge was given to me. People did not understand its relevance initially. I too experienced a problem in explaining it to the people. Wherever I went, people asked: Are you holding charge of the Ministry of Education; or 'Human Resources'—what exactly is this? Now nobody raises such questions.

People in several countries have now accepted this concept and that too our blueprint. They are forming human resource ministries in their countries. It happened in several countries. I feel proud in mentioning this fact and while doing it, I remember Rajivji that he visualised its significance in 85 or 86 immediately after he held the reins of Prime Ministership of this country; he conceptualised that these resources cannot be seen in isolation from others nor can it be said that one resource is more valuable than others. Human beings are the most

valuable resources. The people of India are its most precious treasure. I am very happy to be with you in this programme.

I would like to tell you that we would leave no stone unturned to promote Rajivji's programme for the children and the youth, to promote the cause of the Ministry he formed. Our Government is following his concept.

We are lagging behind in sports and games. But we should not lose heart. Several countries did not participate in international sports for many years, so that their sportspersons can practise hard, can prepare themselves for the international events. Only after that, these countries took part in international events. I am not saying that we would be following the same policy. We will certainly participate in sports events. But we will make special provisions for the training of our sportspersons. We have made exclusive provisions for the sportspersons participating in the Asian Games to be held in 1994. We have provided 20 crore rupees for the training of our players participating in these games. I believe that this programme will keep on flourishing.

You would be surprised to know that earlier we had a provision of mere 20 crore rupees for the sports. When Rajivji came to power, he increased it to 200 crore rupees in one stroke. Such a thing never happened in the history of Planning, that the provision for an item was increased ten-fold in the next Plan. But he created this history. We wondered how would this amount be spent which apparently appeared a huge one but it was utilised properly. The infrastructure, which was made at that time, will serve us permanently. Without that infrastructure, we could not have progressed in the field of sports. This was really a good development. We want this process to continue. We want such ambitious programmes, such country-wide programmes—there can be a number of ways for funding such programmes.

Our big industries have taken immense interest in such programmes. We will encourage them. We will give them concessions,

including tax concessions. We will provide them maximum possible help in this endeavour. Whatever the Government can provide, that will certainly be given. You know that we have a number of programmes but we don't have sufficient money. We have to adjust our meagre resources. But if some good programme comes, we will try to provide funds by doing some adjustments in our budget. Because we cannot sustain a programme without money. The important thing is that we have to prepare our people for this task from their childhood itself. Our children should get all the ingredients of patriotism, goodwill and harmony; total preparation and love for the nation.

This is our endeavour. I feel that Rajivji's dream is taking a concrete shape.

Youth : a Source of Constructive Energy

THIS IS A memorable day for all of us. Memorable because we are remembering a great leader and trying to do something to commemorate him, to perpetuate his memory. It was one of his dreams that an institute like this be established in India.

While we were discussing the New Education Policy in 1985-86, we spent long hours discussing, rediscussing, probably arguing amongst ourselves what the New Policy should be. One of the things which all of us agreed upon was the lead given by Rajivji that this Policy should be tailored to future generations not so much to the present generations who are already working, who cannot perhaps change their nature any more but in moulding future generations in the model

Speech while laying the foundation -stone of Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbudur, 1 September 1993

of India which he had in his dreams, the vision of India which he had before him, and that was a secular, democratic, strong, scientifically and otherwise advanced India. India where cultural values gave the real inspiration to progress and where modernism and culture co-existed so as to give this great country its proper place, its legitimate place in the comity of nations. This vision always inspired him and inspired all of us, because he gave the lead while formulating the new policy. He did not live long enough, unfortunately, to see that dream of the Institute being fulfilled. He would have certainly done it if he had lived longer. But now it has fallen to our lot to see that his dream is fulfilled. In the coming up of this Institute, we are all gratified even in the sadness of his absence that something which he wanted to do, is being done by us today.

This Institution is not just a building. It is not easy to envision the activities of this Institution, the inspiration that it will have in conducting these activities and in what manner exactly it is going to cater to the needs of the younger generation. The Institute has been established here—just the foundation-stone is being laid in this 30 acre plot which Jayalalithaji, the Government of Tamil Nadu donated and I must express my gratitude to them.

We shall live up to Rajivji's desires. That is the one determination we have to make today. There are lots of Youth organisations in the country and perhaps, no one gave them so much impetus as Rajivji did. Youth and sports, these two activities were virtually resurrected by him giving an impetus, which they never received earlier. And we are trying to keep up that impetus today. From a mere Rs. 20 crore allocation in the Sixth Five Year Plan to sports, he suddenly enhanced it 10 times and made it Rs. 200 crore in the Seventh Five Year Plan. Now you can see what enthusiasm he generated in the sports activities of this country. We could see it very rarely that so many new institutions came up, new centres of training came up and with 200 crore rupees India could develop a lot of infrastructure for sports. We had the Asian Games here and I am glad to say that we even bid to have the Olympics here. For various reasons, we were not given the chance to host the Olympics, but then it is only a question of time when the

infrastructure that we have in India impresses everyone and the Olympics also come here. So this is the foundation that he laid for youth and sports activities in this country.

For women he was a great benefactor. The kind of legislation which Parliament passed to solve the multifarious problems of women was unprecedented. Many, many laws were passed. Today, they are being implemented with different degrees of success, of course. But that, of course, was not his responsibility. It is for us and the authorities to implement them properly and I am sure, it is only a question of time before we are able to see the chinks and weaknesses of the implementation of the programme and remove those weaknesses.

This Institution, I am sure will also include in its ambit, young men and women. I am talking of women because this is the idea that is more or less accepted today, that girls and boys would have to take up the mission equally and with equal enthusiasm. I am sure, the organisers of this Institute have that in mind. The programme of the Institute naturally would take some time to be formulated. I am not in a hurry for that. Mukul was just telling me that it is not enough just to have a general discussion, we have to go from generics to specifics and in going from generics to specifics it means lot of perspiration, lot of hard work, lot of coming down to brass tacks, spending time, organising it properly. You may begin not with a grandiose plan, you may begin even humbly with a few items but you must make them a success and more success should come in course of time. In a few years time, I am sure, this Institute will be one of the best in Asia if not in the world. Those who are working here are enthusiastic. They have some varied experience of youth activity and all these factors make me very hopeful that what Rajivji had in mind could be achieved by this Institute. I think this is the best tribute we can pay to Rajivji.

This is what I understand that this Institution is going to be an apex institution with multifaceted functions to work as a resource agency and a think-tank for youth programmes, policies and implementation strategies. Now, each one of these words is very easy to put down on paper, but if you analyse each one of these factors, you will

find that a lot of clarity is needed in our own minds and lot of experience plus lot of insight into the mind of the youth is also necessary. It will develop as a facilitator and a nodal agency for youth training, youth work and youth development in the country in both the rural and urban areas. Boys and girls, rural and urban areas; that is another very important factor because the same *Mantra* will not do for both. You have to have a different strategy, different approach for urban youths. You have to have a slightly different one for the rural youths, depending on the difference in the circumstances and the backgrounds which we are so well aware of. Therefore, in planning this Institute in the initial stages, I want to stress once again that lot of care would be needed.

I have also been told that there will be four kinds of activities here. The programmes are supposed to be thought of as orientation, evaluation, documentation and extension. Now these four have a common ground, common objective but these four are different in their details. Again it needs to be very deeply considered how these four programmes are linked to each other and in what sequence and in what manner. This again would need a lot of thought to go into this.

They have also, I am told, decided to undertake comparative studies of youth work in the SAARC countries. Now, the complication in one country you know, you multiply it by seven. If you take up SAARC as the field of your activity, the complication, difficulty or the joy of achievement is going to be seven-fold. All these countries are not very different but not identical either. Therefore, each country would have to be studied differently in a comparative way and this will be one of the greatest services to SAARC. We have several programmes in SAARC but this, I think, is the most important, because in the years to come, in the decades to come, the youths of these seven countries coming together with the same objective or similar objectives are going to be extremely important for the survival of the SAARC and also the enhancement of the programmes in all fields of activity, because these youths are going to take over the entire administration and nation building activities in the SAARC countries. They need not be leaders, they need not be ministers, but whatever they would be doing that would be part of the nation building activities in all the SAARC

countries. So I feel that in addition to what is being done right now by the present Governments of SAARC, what will be done by the youth of SAARC countries and what will be taken as a model programme here, Institution here or institutions like this in SAARC countries, with a coordinated effort will determine the future of the SAARC activity and the future of the SAARC countries—their relations *inter se* and the manner in which they would like to develop as a combination, as a regional force in the economic and social fields. Lot of studies have been undertaken already in SAARC but I think youth will be well-advised to join those studies at the youth level, and I am sure those who are running these institutions are aware of those programmes. We can help them in the External Affairs Ministry, help them with all the necessary material so that they will take up the job, they will take up the work at the youth level.

As a source of constructive energy, youth is unparalleled. As Mukul was telling you just now, we could not have got into public life at the age of 40 or 45 and 50. No, we were pushed into it or may be, we pushed ourselves into it at the age of 15, 16 and that is how we are in public life. There is an age when you are fired with imagination, fired with idealism and that is the engine that drives you forward. After that age, people may come for posts and jobs but they don't come for sacrifice. And therefore, this is the time when the youth has to be moulded and trained properly.

You are going to have a huge library here; I am sure, consisting mostly on literature on youth and that would be a great asset. We would like to help you to the extent possible in building up the library because any book is not really a part of a library. The book that is needed, the book that gives you the needed information and inspiration that is the kind of book you will have to have in this library, this specialised library. There was a time when we had planned a special library in Prabhakar's town, when his father was working with us, with me, in the Congress. We planned a specialised library of freedom fighters, the history of freedom struggles all over the world, in all the countries. That was the kind of library we wanted to set up. So these specialised libraries are very important. You don't have space for all

kinds of books these days. There is a limited space and that limited space will have to be occupied, to be utilised to the best advantage by having the proper, appropriate, relevant books and nothing more. So this has to be a specialised library where people from all over India, and perhaps abroad could come for reference. It could be a reference library, it could be a library which disseminates information and that is one of the very important aspects of these institutions.

I have seen the details, so far worked out. They are on the right lines. Of course, it is our outline, it cannot be exhaustive in any manner. But I do feel that they are working and thinking on the right lines, and I am sure that by this effort the entire edifice of the Institute, not necessarily the building alone, building plus activity that is what I would call the edifice, would be ideal not only from the point of view of this country but from the point of view of humanity as a whole and that part of humanity is going to be at the helm of affairs in the coming decades.

Promoting Youth Participation in Nation Building

I AM EXTREMELY happy to be associated with the launching of the NSS Silver Jubilee Year and to be with all of you here today. Twenty-four years ago on this day, the National Service Scheme (NSS) was started in 37 universities with 40,000 student volunteers as an experimental educational project outside classrooms. I may also add this point that when this was conceived, there was considerable doubt and controversy about it. The NCC which had already taken its place among the important activities of the student community at the university level was going on and a parallel activity of the NSS was not quite clear to many people. I was Education Minister in my State and I was not able to

grasp why this was being done. Is it because the NCC is a little more costly and you want to cut down the cost and do something. This was one of the arguments advanced. Later on, it became clear that the two are different programmes but at the same time they have to be undertaken by the student community. They have their own relative importance and we have to have this NSS.

In some universities at that time, though very few in the country, social service was one of the optional subjects. Maybe, those who had been teaching in the universities or studying in the universities at that time would remember that Andhra University, for instance, had something like social service. People used to make fun of social service as an optional subject. What does it mean, what do you mean by social service? We can understand mathematics, history, philosophy, geography whatever. What is social service? So, the concept itself had to be elaborated and over a period of time, described and defined; only then the idea of social service becoming a part of the life of a student, the activities of a student was understood. So this has taken some time to take root and I am glad to say that in the New Education Policy, this has been accepted as one of the important things. Significantly that was Gandhiji's Birth Centenary year 1969 and the scheme was a befitting tribute to the memory of the Father of the nation. It would inspire students to go beyond the campus, live with the community and learn from them. A great innovator in education, Gandhiji was deeply aware and concerned about the increasing alienation between the campus and the community, between knowledge and action, between the head and the hand. Inculcating dignity of labour in the higher education system, winning students away from white-collar jobs and making them self-reliant, self-confident and self-respecting citizens, was one of his dreams in building a stronger India. He also wanted to make education a forceful medium for inculcating social and moral values and giving students a purposeful role in fighting against religious fanaticism, superstition, fatalism and violence.

In 1958 when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his letter to Chief Ministers mooted the idea of introducing the community service as part of the higher education system, he sincerely wanted to translate

Gandhiji's ideas into practice. He instructed Ministry of Education to formulate a suitable scheme for the purpose. With this, a National Service Committee was instituted under the Chairmanship of Dr C.D. Deshmukh. A University Commission headed by Dr Radhakrishnan and later the Education Commission headed by Dr Kothari lent their support to the idea. The NSS was a product of the consensus among Vice-Chancellors, State Education Ministers and student leaders. The idea of the NSS received enthusiastic support. Over the years, it was expanded to all the universities and now to schools with 1.1 million student volunteers. This is an indicator of its popularity and success. For this the NSS should be grateful not only to great men and women who conceived the Scheme but also to the millions of students and teachers who joined the organisation and strengthened it by their voluntary contribution.

I am aware of the commendable work, NSS volunteers have been doing in the fields of literacy, environment preservation, blood-donation, health education and AIDS prevention and community service in villages and slums. The voluntary nature of your organisation strengthens the quality of your service and the spontaneity of the popular response to it. The spurt in recent times in voluntary organisations and non-government agencies and their active contribution to developmental efforts at the community level is an encouraging indicator of the good health and vitality of our society. But the NSS is a unique experiment in the sense that it injects and inspires the spirit of voluntarism among students and teachers during their studies. We would like to preserve and promote this experiment further. I am happy that in the New Education Policy, the need for incentives to teachers and academic weightage to students working in the NSS has also been recognised. I am not sure, whether this has been implemented, because we were very inactive about giving academic weightage to students working in NSS and NCC. I would like to know, if this has been done or is being done or is in the process, what exactly is the position? This needs proper follow-up for implementation at the university level. Similarly for sports, is there some weightage to be given to these activities. They have to become part of the syllabus, part of the curriculum and its not just extra curricular activity as it used to

be earlier, so this is the change that the New Education Policy has brought about. At least that is what was intended when the Policy was written. I don't know if this was done. If it has not been done, I think it needs to be done. Similarly the institution of National NSS Award is a step in the right direction to promote youth participation in nation-building. You would all appreciate the fact that these gestures are symbolic and the real recognition of NSS will be from the people among whom all of you work. That is the real satisfaction of your work.

The NSS motto says, "not me but you," which expresses the essence of democratic living and respect for other people's point of view. We live in a pluralistic society, we have a long history of respecting the faiths and beliefs of individuals, groups and communities. This pluralism has given us, our strength to absorb and assimilate new ideas. Indian civilization has survived because of its continuity and change, because of its creative response to internal and external challenges. The youths have a great responsibility in this field because it is they who have to inherit and build upon all the positive values in our composite cultural heritage. The lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18 years was done with this view. It has given young people, the opportunity to play an effective and catalytic role in social stability, growth and change. The NSS volunteers by their motivation and hard work can help accelerate this process. Let the Silver Jubilee year of the NSS be devoted to social harmony, happiness and progress.

I would just add one more point for the consideration of Mukul and others, who were actually drawing up the programmes when I was Minister in HRD. I had entrusted a piece of work to Mukul Wasnik and his friends who were student leaders at that time in their areas. I asked them to give me what exactly is the drop-out rate in the primary schools taking one or two districts in that area. Now we have got lots of national surveys and NCERT reports and all that can be done by students going from school to school and village to village. It cannot be done by research scholars, by research assistants, paid research assistants in the institutions. They will do only sampling work. So I took up this work and Mukul and his friends were very enthusiastic and I thought, this was the enthusiasm of the first day; but it was not so.

Within three or four months, they produced voluminous figures, accurate figures from student to student from school to school. If 50 boys or girls have been admitted in class one, out of them how many remained in class two, how many remained in class three, how many remained in class four and ultimately every year in every class the figure was worked out. It was the most accurate reliable information on drop-outs, I could ever come across. Because it was done by going from school to school with no TAs and DAs. They did it in the summer vacation. They did not have to go from one village to another. In each village there were boys. They were given the proformas. At the end of one week, two weeks, three weeks they completed the work. Then all that was taken to another centre, they were collated. They gave me the final figures of those two or three districts which I consider as the most accurate figures you can think of. If it can be done in three districts, it can be done in 400 districts. And the reliable figures on all these educational items are extremely important in planning. If in a village you find that the drop-out rate is so much, you take the highest rate villages, then the students can go and find out why is it so, why is it much less in the neighbouring village. What is the reason? Then you go into the nitty-gritty of it and this is called micro-planning. If you don't go into the micro aspects you will never know sitting in Delhi, what is happening. The NCERT will give you only big raw figures for the whole country. But it is only these boys and girls who could give you exactly, why village 'X' is different from village 'Y'. And when you know the reason, you know the remedy. Knowing the reason is equal to knowing the remedy. And if this had been the approach, by this time much of the great wastage that is involved in drop-outs, could have been at least detected, analysed, completely diagnosed and at least in part, we could have countered it. Why don't you take it up now? You take it up in the next summer vacation. These boys can be given work which has something to do with the hands and at the same time some thinking, some talking, some interaction with the people. All this will make them better boys. They will understand the feelings of the local people. I think they will become wiser if they undertake one or two projects like this. So you must think of some innovative projects. Give the districts or the state or the institutions, wherever it maybe, some autonomy. Don't foist the same thing all over the country. It may or

may not be suitable there. I mean in Nagaland and Mizoram, where the education is so well spread, you don't need to calculate drop-outs because there will be no drop-outs there. In Kerala there will be very few drop-outs. In Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, drop-outs will be much higher than those, who are retained at school.

As things differ and circumstances differ, you can take up different programmes and fine tune them to the needs of the area. So I think the NSS Programme is the most intelligent programme and a programme which can be made intellectually and physically satisfying. So I thank you very much for having called me here on this occasion. I congratulate you on this occasion. I give you all my blessings, all the support that you would need.

Education for All

IT IS, INDEED, an honour to address this historic Conference and outline our national goals and strategies in the area of basic education. The goal of independence was achieved through a prolonged struggle during which the far-sightedness of the leaders of the freedom struggle resulted in the concretisation of socio-economic goals to be achieved after the attainment of freedom in India. Basic education is a valuable legacy of our freedom struggle. Even in the midst of the epic struggle for freedom, Mahatma Gandhi had, in association with eminent educationists like Dr Zakir Husain, evolved an alternative education system that was in keeping with the ethos of the Indian society. In the 1930s, the National Planning Committee, under the Chairmanship of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, had undertaken an analysis of the educational system and had made far-reaching recommendations for our country's educational reorganisation.

Free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years is a Constitutional obligation. Ever since Planning began in 1950, we have been striving towards universalisation of elementary education and total literacy. What has been accomplished, in terms of literacy, spread of institutions, participation and equalisation of educational opportunities is spectacular considering the very low base at which we started after independence. Literacy rate has nearly trebled from less than 19 per cent in 1951 to about 53 per cent in 1991 during which the population has also increased two-and-a-half times; the number of primary schools has increased from over two lakh nine thousand in 1951 to over five lakh sixty-five thousand in 1992; upper primary schools have increased from over thirteen thousand five hundred to one lakh fifty-two thousand. Access to schooling has been substantially achieved at the primary stage with 95 per cent of the rural population having access to primary schools within one kilometre radius. Today, the elementary education system enrolls 136 million children as compared to only 22.3 million in 1951. The years since independence had also witnessed remarkable strides in the equalisation of educational opportunities. The wide difference between the opportunities available to boys and girls has been considerably reduced.

Obviously, we shall have a long way to go. We need to strengthen the formal system and simultaneously develop alternative systems of primary education effective on a large scale. We need to overhaul the management of education. We need to mobilise local communities for the cause of basic education. We need to improve teachers' competence, motivation and performance. We need to do a myriad other things to overhaul the system itself. Business as usual would not do. Thus, a marathon race is ahead of us before we reach the goals of universalisation of elementary education and universal literacy. We, as a nation, are conscious of this challenge and would face it squarely with determination and resolve. In this task, however, we have an important new ally, namely the innovative system of distance education as well as numerous other modern devices that will make teaching and learning a pleasant experience and an accelerated process. This will open a new vista of success and achievement.

We have in the National Policy on Education, 1986 and its Programme of Action, an excellent framework for guiding the national effort. This Policy is the outcome of the very special interest and vision of our late Prime Minister and leader, Rajiv Gandhi. The Policy is not only based on an in-depth analysis of the education system but also draws its inspiration and content from the intensive process of debate and dialogue that preceded it, over the entire country involving all sections concerned with the educational process. In 1992 the Policy and its Programme of Action were revised through a similar consensual process. The Policy is path-breaking in several respects. If I may say so, it anticipated the Jomtien Declaration and its framework for action. It recognised the organic unity of early childhood education, primary schooling, non-formal education, adult education and post-literacy and lifelong process, encompassing a wide diversity of learning opportunities, applying to all people, laying stress on girls, children and youth, particularly, those belonging to disadvantaged groups. Even while stressing school effectiveness, it boldly sought to address the more difficult aspects of access to education of millions of children who are beyond the pale of the school system. To reach out to these millions, it had postulated a large and systematic programme of non-formal education as an integral component of the strategy to achieve universalisation of elementary education. It perceived education as an agent of basic change in the status of women, of playing a positive, interventionist role in their empowerment. It articulated the imperative of enlisting for the cause of education, non-government and voluntary effort including social activist groups. It was thus a comprehensive policy with vision and flexibility, and laid special emphasis on social justice and equality in the field of education.

There is an increasing awareness in India that education is not a unilinear catalyst, only endowing societies with vocational and employment capacity, but that it is a multidimensional instrument for improving the quality of life of every section in society. Education or literacy contributes to socio-cultural consciousness about the issues like women's welfare, health, social and personal hygiene, nutrition, care of children, their protection from health hazards and their mental development through primary education. It is in this dimension that we

conceive education as a galvanising force in social dynamics and development.

Education in India is what we call a concurrent subject in our Constitution, envisaging a sharing of responsibility between the Union Government and the State governments in respect of this vital area of national life. The National Policy on Education gave an operational meaning to this challenging partnership and unfolded new avenues of Central support to basic education.

The priority assigned to basic education is reflected by the steep step up of resource allocation for basic education in the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), by over 313 per cent in comparison with the expenditure during the Seventh Plan. I have no hesitation in saying that the nation as a whole will assume the responsibility of providing resource support for the national goals of basic education expounded by the National Policy on Education.

What I mean by the nation as a whole assuming the responsibility of providing resource support for basic education is best illustrated by the saga of total literacy campaigns. As the dusk settles a few hours from now, over four million volunteers spread across the length and breadth of this sub-continent would be engaged in these campaigns trying to impart functional literacy to millions of learners; a majority of these volunteers are women. It is the zeal and dedication of these millions of participants in the National Literacy Mission that has brought about a sea change in the public perception of adult literacy. Universal adult literacy is no longer perceived to be a hopeless dream but an achievable task. This literacy wave that started in Ernakulam district four years ago is now reaching the more difficult terrains of low literacy campaigns. The nation as a whole can take pride in the total literacy campaigns which encompass massive social mobilisation, the grand alliance of the government, NGOs, volunteers and learners, and the confluence of folk culture, communication and education and the linkage between other developmental issues.

The years since 1986, when the National Policy on Education was enunciated, have witnessed major interventions and innovations at

all levels in the educational process. Just to cite a few, the Operation Blackboard, which was conceived for improvement of primary schools and provision of support services, the district institutes of education and training, which provided institutional infrastructure for teacher training, the programme of non-formal education, which has the objective of enabling learners to learn at their own pace, the national curricular framework, the laying down of minimum levels of learning and so on. I have also in mind innumerable innovations, large and small, spearheaded by non-governmental bodies in testing and implementing new, creative approaches. To illustrate, Mahila Samakhya, a unique programme of women's empowerment and education; *Shikshakarmi*, which addresses to the problem of providing basic education in remote rural areas; the PROPEL project which mobilises rural communities through participative micro-planning; the efforts of Ekalavya to promote science education and so on. Another very important experiment is of the Navodaya Vidyalayas which bring out the great talent available, but languishing in the remote rural areas and arrange for their education through these special schools absolutely free from any payment by the people. I think this type of school deserves particular attention in developing countries with disparate societies.

The value of these innovations for leavening the education system cannot be overemphasized; we cannot have enough of them. It is in this context that exchange of ideas and experience between countries assumes significance. Rabindranath Tagore's observation at the foundation of Visva Bharati comes to my mind:

“We must build up a relationship with the whole world, to serve, and be served, to give and to receive. We want to be one with the world's learning.”

And, that is why he named it Visva Bharati. This historic Meeting, I trust, would pave the way for institutional mechanism for dialogue among the nine high population countries, in association with the international agencies.

In the ultimate analysis, it is the management of educational structure and processes that would determine the pace of advancement to universal elementary education. In a continental nation like India, primary education cannot be dealt with, in general; it can only be dealt with, in particular. Therefore, planning for universal elementary education is being increasingly shifted from the State to district and local levels. A new initiative called the District Primary Education Programme seeks to operationalise the strategy of decentralised planning in districts with low female literacy rate as well as in districts where total literacy campaigns have enhanced the demand for elementary education. The programme would focus on the learning needs of girls, and disadvantaged groups.

The recent amendments to the Indian Constitution unfold a new era of empowering the local communities to assume greater responsibilities in many developmental areas including education. Decentralisation of educational administration and motivation of local communities thus offer a great challenge to the nation and simultaneously opportunity and hope for universal elementary education.

The question of financial outlays on education has presented several difficulties in India as has been pointed out by other countries as well and I am sure that this is the case everywhere. While it was clubbed with social services in the initial stages of Planning and received mainly expression of good intentions along with cut-prone inadequate funds, the situation has improved considerably of late. Still, we are nowhere near where we should be according to our own accepted Policy. This is the field in which political will is the greatest necessity. Outlays on education would also depend on the pace at which programmes like power, oil, industry etc. which had taken up the bulk of the government's budgetary support hitherto, are taken over by non-governmental investment channels. Taking all these into account, I feel confident that given determination, we can reach the 6 per cent GDP level of total investment on education in India when we enter the 21st century.

In conclusion, Excellencies, let me say once again that the prospects for all the countries are good because I find that there is a

determination, there is hope, there is introspection, looking back, taking stock and going ahead. This is the spirit which I have gathered from all the speeches which I have heard right now in this session. This augurs very well for education in all these countries and perhaps this augurs even better for a peaceful world in the coming decades.

Let me say once again that we as a nation are fully conscious of the challenges that the goals of education for all pose and would face the challenges squarely with determination and resolve.

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IT IS WITH great satisfaction that I am now standing before you. We, the representatives of nine high population countries and three UN organisations have just signed a historic document which heralds a new dawn—a dawn of hope and resurrection. The Delhi Declaration is a reaffirmation of our faith and commitment to achieve Education for All. We have also agreed upon a framework of action, which contains the detailed strategies for making the world fully literate within the next few years.

What is now required is action—action not only by governments but by all together—the NGOs, the community at large and all people. Dedicated work alone will make the dream come true. We, in India, have already proved through our total literacy campaigns in many parts of our country how community mobilisation can create a wave of literacy. It is no more a question of lighting a candle here or there; it is total lighting. The whole world has to glow with the light of literacy. For that concerted action is required and the Declaration we have signed is the signal to that action.

Education for All is not a mere question of literacy. It is an empowerment of people. What is it that we are seeking? We are striving to achieve a world in which peace and harmony reign, a world free of poverty and malnutrition. Education is the path that leads to that

world. But what is to be borne in mind is that life is one and the world is one, and all questions are interlinked. Illiteracy, poverty, disease, population explosion, strifes are all parts of a vicious circle. Each is important and urgent but dealing with them one by one is waste of time and effort. We have to take a holistic approach. Education for All strategy encompasses all these aspects.

What is now required is loosening that mental block which holds us back from giving our all to this great endeavour. Our holy texts, ancient texts say that in considering educational questions, we must prepare to disengage ourselves from mental luggage, from prejudices and pet solutions, seek to learn the unknown and unknown is what is unlearnt, what is assumed. In education we know that there are no final answers. As educationists, we have come to that conclusion time and again. As the circumstances change we have to change our strategies. The strategies change but the objective remains. That is what we have to learn again and again. Any mental blocks that we may gather in the process will have to be removed from time to time. Then, we will find that what appeared an impossible dream, is an achievable target. Several examples of this have been given in the speeches that we heard today and I am sure more and more examples will be forthcoming by our own achievements in the near future.

Unique Culture of Punjabis

I AM VERY happy to be here today at the 23rd annual convention of the International Punjabi Society. I am glad to note that the convention while focussing on the subject of *Punjabi* which after a good deal of definition has been left undefined—since Surendra Nathji just threw up his hands and said, he cannot complete it, nor it is possible to complete it—will be making a special reference to nationalism and secularism.

Speech while inaugurating the 23rd annual convention of the International Punjabi Society, New Delhi, 24 December 1993

In every sense of the term Punjabis today are a truly international community. In our young days, we were talking about the Aiyars of Palghat that when someone went to Mount Everest he was disappointed to find that before he discovered Mount Everest there was an Aiyar sitting there with his coffee. This joke I have heard about Punjabis also. It can never be anything except an international community because you are in a larger number of countries than perhaps the people from any part of India. You don't have to go into statistics. But the point is that the urge to go out in search of adventure, in search of livelihood, in search of a better life, is something quite inherent in the Punjabis, and in some other parts of India also, if I may add.

In various far-flung corners of the world there are thriving Punjabi communities, who, through their hard work, enterprise, initiative and dynamism, have created a well-deserved niche for themselves. These people, from the land of five rivers, the birthplace of Saint *Guru Nanak*, where the *Vedas* were written 3000 years ago, people with a glorious heritage going back more than five thousand years, have carried with them to these distant lands their vigorous, vibrant culture, a fierce pride in their language, robust common sense, a capacity to adjust to changing circumstances, their joy of living, their valour and chivalry and whatever else is the essence of *Punjabi*.

When I hear you talking in Punjabi, the first thing that strikes me is that the Punjabi grammar follows Sanskrit grammar more than any other language in India. Not many Punjabis know about it, because you have to know both the languages to know this. The other language which to some extent follows the Sanskrit grammar is Bengali. The other languages have completely changed—not only the language but the grammar also. They have simplified it. You have not simplified it. You have kept it in some respects more or less the same as Sanskrit grammar which means that Punjabi was where the *Vedas* were born. You have a longer tradition of ancient India than many other places. Naturally, if it had to go, it had to migrate to other places, it took some time, maybe several centuries to reach other places.

The first thing that struck me about Punjab was when I visited Port Blair, the Andamans. I am sure every one has to visit that place, not necessarily as a convict, but as a visitor, as a tourist.

There is a place called the 'Radial Prison'—notorious you can call it, famous you can call it, but well-known throughout the world. You go into that Prison today and go into the records, you will find that the largest number of persons hanged in the Jail were from Punjab. Whenever I go there, I make it a point to go into that place and thumb through the old records a little more. That shows the extent to which the people from Punjab, young men from Punjab, were prepared to lay down their lives and how they dared the punishment of being hanged, how they faced the hanging, how bravely, how cheerfully. In the case of each of those there is some episode or the other, maybe embellished a little later, but the point is that not one of them ever regretted for having done the act for which he was hanged. This is the great characteristic which I find, the first impression about this spirit of sacrifice, this spirit of courage and defiance of the Punjabis was from that Jail.

The many sacrifices made by the great *Gurus* for the cause of religion and their country have been a source of inspiration for the Punjabis. This is the reason why the Punjabis have been in the forefront in various fields—whether in the freedom struggle or in the battlefield fighting the enemy, or in revolutionising agricultural production and turning Punjab into the granary of India. Their zeal combined with their robust common sense and hard work has brought them success. Wherever they have been, all over the world and whatever they have touched has turned into something very good, very profitable, very useful.

The contribution of the people of Punjab to India has been immense. It is quite obvious. Siddhartha Shankar Ray told us once—when he was the Governor of Punjab during the most troubled period; all of us know about it—that for 23 hours and 50 or 55 minutes, Punjab is at the top in everything even in those days, take agriculture, take industry, take even the Red Cross activity; only five minutes in 24

hours, something happens somewhere and the wrong thing is said about Punjab in the next day's papers. For 23 hours and 50 or 55 minutes, he said, Punjab is right at the top. Take any activity, developmental activity or any other activity in India for which Punjab went on getting awards after awards. Wherever we had an award by Rashtrapatiji, it was Punjab coming first. But five minutes or three minutes everyday or every two days or three days or ten days, whatever, that is the thing that really comes in banner headlines about Punjab. So, what do you expect? Punjab was seen as a place where nothing but violence takes place. Nothing else happened except killing. It was very unfair to Punjab in those days. Yes, killing did take place, violence did take place, but many other very good things also took place even in that time. They were never reported. Nobody knew about them whether in the country or outside. This is what I think was very unfair. But then that is how it is. What is reported is what goes wrong. If everything is right, there is nothing to report, newspapers would close down.

The contribution of the people of Punjab has been immense. The Punjabis have worked hard to strengthen nationalism and secularism in the country. Throughout history, they have borne the brunt of foreign invasions and have safeguarded the country's borders. We all know that in the last decade or so Punjab has been through a turbulent phase and an abnormal situation.

Punjab has always been the shield of India. Some times in other States when they talk about their literature, about their poetry, about their music, and the rajas and the kingdoms and the development of all those things, I tell them, Do you know that all this progress whether it is in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, wherever, you owe this to Punjab? Punjab was shielding you. Punjab was saving you from a part of that bloodshed. You had peace, you had plenty and you had time with all the *darbars* and the poets and the *Navaratnas* and all those people to develop in a peaceful way the cultural and other aspects of life. All this is Indian heritage. The sacrifice of Punjab is Indian heritage. The progress that has been achieved in many fields as a result of peace prevailing in those areas also is a part of the Indian heritage. One part of India saves the other parts of India. One part of

India helps the other parts of India to develop. Today, Punjab produces food and that food is eaten all over the country. No one knows where it comes from, unless you tell him that this is from Ludhiana or some place in Punjab. So, this is how the country has been maintaining its unity, its coordinated effort and in this the contribution of Punjab has been very, very significant, very, very important.

The convention's focus on nationalism and secularism is particularly welcome. In the situation prevailing in India today, this focus is extremely relevant. India has always been a multi-religious, multi-lingual, multicultural mosaic. How could it be otherwise? No one can imagine India with one race or one religion or one caste or whatever. Even in electoral politics, we have seen, most of us have seen, to our dismay that a party which depends on one religion or one caste never gets elected. It has to be a combination. It has to be many together to achieve something. India can never be otherwise. People who are following the cult of separatism, the cult of exclusivism are barking up the wrong tree. The sooner they understand this, the sooner they realise this, the better it will be for themselves as well as for the whole country.

Of course, there are forces, as Surendra Nathji said which will do their damndest to prevent this happening. But we will do our best to make this happen. This is the tussle, this is the eternal tussle, the eternal struggle between *Punjabi* or *Hindostani* on the one hand and those who want to break these for their own reasons. And, the reasons are not very far to see. I do not want to go into all the details. But there are many reasons. We can understand why there are forces in the world which do not want India to prosper. This is not a complaint, this is not a grievance, this is a fact of life. Every Indian has to understand this and face this. Nothing more to add to this because a fact of life is a fact of life.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the role the International Punjabi Society has been playing since its inception. The Punjabis, being the largest Indian community settled abroad, need such an international, non-political, non-religious platform which has been

provided by this organisation. I am told that one of the basic objectives of this Society has been to promote Punjabi culture and promote unity between people of different religions. I know that the Society has, indeed, performed its role most creditably. It has become a useful forum for the Punjabi community settled in various parts of the world to share their Punjabi culture and values. Through its activities the Society has also instilled among the Punjabis, especially those belonging to the younger generation, a desire to learn and appreciate their culture and heritage.

When it comes to language, one discovery, which I have made through my last fifty years of public life and some part in the literary field that the unity of this country comes through the diversity in language. *Boli badalti hai, baat nahin badalti! Baat wahi kahi jaati hai har boli mein!* The essence is the same, the content is the same. Each language has its own beauty which inherently captivates those who speak the language. And this is the greatest thing. And all this together brings out the profundity of the learning, profundity of the feeling which Indian ethos has. So, this has manifested through the languages. This is what, I have seen and I am glad that in the shape of the Punjabi language or any other language, something Indian is being encouraged abroad before the younger generation forgets about it. If they forget the language, they will proceed to forget everything because language is a well-spring for many other things.

No one can translate one language into another with hundred per cent accuracy. The idea cannot be expressed in any other language particularly a Western language. I may be able to translate Punjabi into Hindi or Hindi into Bengali much better, maybe with 95 or 99 per cent accuracy; but if you go to English, it is a hopeless thing. You will not be able to express it because the ethos is different, the base is different, the genius of the language is different. Therefore, if any people of Indian origin settled abroad make a special effort to keep knowledge of the language going among the younger generation, they will be doing a great service not to the language itself but to their ethos as people of Indian origin and that is why when we talk of Punjabi, when we talk of other languages, we are really talking of that particular Indian ethos

which is inherent in all the languages as the base of our culture. So, I am glad that this is also being done by the Association.

I have no doubt that no matter where the Punjabi community is settled, they are enriching the life and culture of the people there with their contribution.

I would like to end by saying that it gives me great pleasure to inaugurate the 23rd annual convention of the International Punjabi Society. I thank the organisers for having invited me today and for having given me this opportunity to speak to this gathering here.

I am sure, you will be coming up with several suggestions to strengthen the bonds of kinship. I only say that those who have left the Indian shores, gone to other countries, I have seen this as a uniform experience everywhere, they are bothered about the culture, they want to keep their cultural links intact, strengthen them. I have always made it a point to meet the Indian community in other countries and have found this urge, this yearning for keeping the cultural bonds with India intact and now we have so many other fields in which stronger bonds or equally strong bonds can be forged like the new climate of industrialisation which we have tried to create in this country. Quite a number of NRIs are enthusiastic about it. I have seen their enthusiasm myself. We do feel that in the years to come, this will materialise into more concrete programmes.

Mobilising Youth to Bring About Social Change

I AM, INDEED, very happy to be here today with you at the National Youth Award ceremony. We observe this ceremony every year on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest philosophers and thinkers of modern India and a symbol of its youth. This function is our tribute to this great soul who inspired millions of people throughout our country and will continue to do so.

In the first place let me very heartily congratulate all the award winners of today, boys and girls, who exuded so much of enthusiasm, so much of optimism and give us so much of hope for the future. This is only a token that they have received today. But this token really means a recognition of the fact that these young boys and girls will grow up to become useful citizens of the country and they will go from strength to strength. I give them all my blessings for a very, very fruitful future in their lives.

Swami Vivekananda was a man of vision. He acquired at a very young age profound knowledge of Indian religion and philosophy. He explained to us their significance and continuing relevance in the modern world. He projected an image of India which the world was unaware of, bringing in a new respect and admiration for India abroad and reviving our self-esteem. But above all he taught us how to distinguish between the eternal values of religion, which have an abiding role in society and customs and traditions, which we must adopt with changing times.

Swami Vivekananda's message was a message of unity. He stressed the need for us to know our rich heritage and interpret it in its correct spirit of nationalism and humanism. Our cultural heritage binds us into a strong and united nation. It teaches us how to show love and

respect for our fellow citizens. If some people in our country fail to appreciate this they have only their ignorance to hold responsible for it. Knowledge enriches the human character. It helps us understand ourselves and others. It enables us to view our diversities and differences in the correct perspective and not to get perturbed by them. There are no short cuts to knowledge. It comes from hard work and humility.

Swami Vivekananda wrote and spoke on practically all facets of life. I would like to draw your attention to the special message he had for the youth of India. I think that this is the most appropriate forum for this purpose, in recognition of those, who have enthusiastically come forward to work for national development and social service.

Swamiji had a special place in his heart for youth. He reminded us that India is the ancient land where wisdom made its home before it went to any other country. Great sages traversed its length and breadth binding its people into one great culture. Here first sprang enquiries into the philosophical questions of life and death, of human beings and nature. Then this spirit of enquiry waned. Society lost its dynamism, its flexibility and its ability to adopt to changes. Social customs rigidified into rituals and classes fossilised into a perfidious caste system. Religion became an instrument of exploitation and social animosities repulsed the spirit of cooperation.

Swamiji's message for India's youth was a call for change, for reform and for revival. He felt that as a nation we had lost our individuality and that was the cause of our decline. He appealed to the people to join hands to restore this individuality. He said:

“We have to give back to the Nation it's lost individuality and raise the masses. India is to be raised, the poor have to be fed, education is to be spread.....More bread, more opportunity for everybody.”

It is quite remarkable that in spite of all the great philosophical heights that he had raised, he was always on *terra firma* and he talked

about bread, he talked about youth, he talked about affairs of the world because that is the only way of giving salvation to the people because those who are labouring under difficulties, under disabilities will never be able to appreciate either a hoary past or the philosophy of the nation. They have to be taken care first and that is why we say *Manav-sewa* and *Madhav-sewa* are the same; that is, if you want to serve God, serve man first. That was Swami Vivekananda's first important message to the youth and to those, who think that they are serving the country: "Serve the people first, through them serve God."

It is the young people who can help in bringing about social change, the most important prerequisite for sustained economic growth. I look upon the youth of this country to address themselves to the problems being faced by us, be it economic or social. And now one more dimension is added to economic and social, that is environmental. In the coming years, the youth will find this new dimension really baffling. It is just the beginning, but in the coming one or two decades, I am sure, the problems of environment, the problems of ecology, world wide, are going to confront you in a much more menacing form than they have confronted us so far. But we are already facing the toughness of those problems and in the years to come you will have to brace yourself to face these problems. It is the youth of India who can help our society break away from these shackles and move towards the 21st century as a nation worthy of entering it. We as a nation must promote the pursuit of knowledge in all fields and inculcate the self-confidence to stand as an equal among the most developed countries of the world. Swami Vivekananda could do it a century ago in distant Chicago. He led the way. It is for us to follow in his footsteps.

There are various openings and opportunities available to our youths for taking up community services. We have a strong network of non-governmental organisations which the Government is trying to promote since it is very cost-effective. As a matter of fact, we have given special emphasis to the non-governmental sector during our Eighth Plan period. Simultaneously, the Government is also implementing other schemes like National Service Scheme which is primarily meant for students where they can actively participate in activities relating to social change.

These schemes are only a demonstration of what people can achieve by helping each other. I strongly believe that an individual committed to social change, can pursue this goal on his own without depending on anybody for support. I am sure, what I have said, can be corroborated by these young men and women, whose contribution to society we are acknowledging today. I congratulate them once again. I commend the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports for instituting this Award and investing it with the high prestige that goes to make an award a coveted one.

The National Youth Festival, proposed by the Department of Youth Affairs and Sports from this year will be a significant step towards mobilising the youths of the country. I am sure, this Festival will go a long way towards regenerating our culture and will promote at the national level the folk-arts and crafts, which have fallen into disuse.

Peace is Vital for Education and Progress

THIS IS, INDEED, an occasion for happiness for all of us. For some years there was a demand from this area that a Central University be set up here. The setting up of a Central University is not an easy task. As you know there were, at that time, not more than four or five Central Universities in the country. It is the State Government's function to establish a university. In our Constitution, the subject of universities is in the State List. We have some 150 universities in the country. But Assam's situation is different and the State Government said there were universities in the State but Assam needed two more. In other States

Free rendering of speech in Hindi at a public meeting while inaugurating the work of Central University, Silchar, 21 January 1994

there are five or six or seven universities. Assam said that it could not set up more universities with its own resources and therefore, the Centre should establish two Central Universities in Assam.

At first the Centre sanctioned one university. Perhaps you know that many of our States do not have a single Central University. There are two or three States which have one Central University. Barring Uttar Pradesh no State has two Central Universities. I am happy to say that after UP, yours is the only State where the Centre is setting up two Central Universities and the credit for that goes to our late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. When these decisions were taken during his Prime Ministership, I was the Minister of Human Resource Development, which covers education. That Ministry took all the steps and I am happy that it has been settled that Assam would have two Central Universities. What remains is the laying of the foundation-stone. We are having country-wide elections to the Rajya Sabha and the law says that when elections are in progress, no foundation-stones should be laid. Assam has no elections but there are polls in neighbouring West Bengal and it can be argued that this can influence the poll there. We, therefore, thought that we may not lay the foundation-stone but the work on the University could begin. Actually the work has already started. The Vice-Chancellor is here and, I hear, some good architects are here to plan the buildings and possibly the plans are also ready. But I would not like the university to wait for the buildings to come up.

It is important that the work should go ahead and the task of imparting instruction must get precedence over buildings. When teaching starts, buildings would follow in due course. I am aware that there are many colleges and universities which began working in small buildings. Some even started their career in small halls but gradually, in three, four or five years, their own buildings also came up and they are functioning now as fullfledged universities right before our eyes. It is important, therefore, that the teaching work should begin and I am told that it has actually begun. I would like to get the details of the work that is in progress.

I would like to congratulate all of you on this University coming up here and on the teaching work that has already begun. I also wish

that the construction work should not take much time and should be completed as soon as possible. Of course, there are no universities like the one which is coming up here. As I said, this would be a unique University with its own special identity. This University has to meet the special requirements of this State, specially the technical requirements. I know that this border area, the North-East region, has great natural resources but we do not have the funds to exploit them for the benefit of the people of the region. I would, therefore, like to suggest that our biggest task here should be, and the priority should be accorded to, the development of natural resources and make full use of that base. The various departments of this Institution should base their work on the resources of the region. The courses should be prepared accordingly so that our young people who come out of the university would immediately find work, jobs or self-employment, whatever way you may describe it, and the poverty of the region is thus abolished as soon as possible. This is a backward region but I know that there is no dearth of gas in this State. It has a vast gas field. We are importing gas from other countries because we are short of gas and we badly need gas for setting up industries and for generating power. Whatever resources we need for our economic progress based on gas, we will ensure that they are harnessed. I assure you that the gas on which you are sitting would be used for the benefit of all of you, your State and the country.

There was a mention just now of railway facilities. A section of railways goes up from Guwahati to Luming but this can be extended. I will ask the Railway Minister and the railway authorities to see that this extension takes place so that this region opens up as soon as possible and you have no problem of transportation. This is important but the most important is the need for peace being preserved. I have come here to tell you about the need for peace. Why just one or two universities only? We are prepared to do everything that you require for your development but peace is something which we cannot bring you from Delhi. You have to provide it here and it has to come from the people here. I have been Home Minister and I have been Education Minister and now in my capacity of Prime Minister when I look back on the past, I feel that there has been a great tragedy here, in Assam

and there, in Punjab and that there has been no peace during the last 10-12 years. Whatever progress you could have achieved in the past ten or twelve years, whatever industrial development could take place was thwarted. Now there is peace in Punjab and the State is fast advancing on the path of progress. In the past two years Punjab has taken big strides and terrorism and the cult of the gun have come to an end. Thanks to peace, Punjab is back on the path of progress. Agriculture is making progress and industry is developing fast because of the prevalence of peace. It is accepted by all that today Punjab ranks among the most peaceful of our States. I earnestly wish that like Punjab you should also have peace. Efforts in that direction are being made. But I want this to happen quickly and everybody who lives here must live in peace.

It is good that some (tribal) Councils are being set up here in Assam. But there is no need for violence to decide what their powers should be, whether they should have more or less powers, whether ten villages would be here or there. I have been maintaining for a long time that all these questions can be settled by mutual and peaceful discussions. Whether they pertain to the setting up of the Councils or any other, the Government of India is ready for discussions. We want to follow the path of peace because violence cannot help you to achieve anything. I wish to tell those who seek to indulge in violence that they are harming the interests of the country, their State, the interests of you people and even their own interests. Nobody would benefit by violence. The young people should particularly realise that violence would retard their own progress and their contemporaries in Bihar, West Bengal or Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere would leave them behind in the race for progress. That is not good for India because we wish to see the youths of the entire country to go ahead on the path of progress and march shoulder to shoulder. So, the peace which prevails in other parts of the country and which has now been established in Punjab should also prevail in every nook and corner of Assam. I wish to make this fervent appeal to you. I do not seek anything else from you; I would give you everything you need. If you are ready to establish peace there would be no problem left in this State in the next two or three years and you will achieve as much progress as you may wish for.

Maintaining High Standard in Education

I STUDIED HERE under the supervision of great, world famous professors in the Fergusson College of the Deccan Education Society. This has forged a relationship between you and me. I congratulate you since we have this emotional link. I convey my good wishes to this institution which Patangraoji has established in the great tradition of century-old educational institutions in your province. This tradition has to be carried forward and I am sure he would spare no efforts to do so. His efforts will, in turn, inspire others in our country to set up similar institutions.

I would like to place before you an issue of relevance to the propagation of education in our country. The voluntary educational institutions should now come forward to look after the entire area of higher education. As far as possible, the government will take care of the primary stages of education and of preparing school children to enter the colleges. If this division of work takes place we can help the private enterprise and all those who have been working in this sphere and have earned a good name and experience in engaging fully in educational and social work. They can then carry the programme forward.

I say this because the Government alone cannot handle higher education, considering the difficulties we have to encounter. I know how voluntary educational institutions in Maharashtra, in the old Bombay Presidency, began and developed higher education. For primary education the Government has to shoulder responsibility in this and other States. This is a Constitutional responsibility also. In that area too voluntary bodies can come in but basically it is the responsibility of the Government. If this division can take place, I would say that we can progress in both spheres. The responsibility of maintaining

high standards and the quality of education can thus be discharged and this programme can be successfully implemented. Just now the Governor pointed out that it is not enough to put up buildings here. Of course, we need buildings, laboratories and libraries but what is more important is the position of the professors who run these institutions and who are their soul. I am proud of the fact that I was taught by eminent professors and similarly you are learning at the feet of very good teachers. I am happy about it.

The opportunity to visit your institution came my way today, although Patangraoji called me often. I am happy about this opportunity to meet you all and to see the work of your institution. I think our educational programme is facing many problems today. Education has become a commercial activity. Seats are being hawked and one does not know how much money each student has to pay for admission. The Supreme Court has given a decision on this subject recently and all of us have to bear it in mind that education cannot become a commerce and cannot become a sales proposition. There can be no objection about the fees charged on the basis of the costs incurred because education is a costly proposition and expenses are involved. But we have fought against this commercialisation of education in our time. I had taken part in the struggle in my student days and as Education Minister, I fully supported the agitation.

We do not wish this enterprise to be stopped and want that these institutions of higher learning in the private sector must continue. Both the Government and you are interested in their continuance. But it will be our policy to prevent its commercialisation. We will not allow this to happen. I am glad that the Maharashtra Government and the Government of Andhra Pradesh have recast their fee structure in accordance with the Supreme Court's order. There should, therefore, be no difficulty in that regard. There are, however, some people in voluntary organisations who take the view that if the Supreme Court's order is fully applied they would find it difficult to run their institutions. I have not gone into this matter and, therefore, cannot express any opinion on it here. Their difficulties may be genuine, but on the other hand it is the principle that we can never allow education or seats in

educational institutions to be sold. I think in a few days a balance would be found and some compromise formula would be evolved after mutual consultations. We will have to keep in mind the principles laid down by the Supreme Court and decide the fee structure for Engineering, Medical and other colleges.

We have an Education Policy, called the New Education Policy, although the policy is now seven or eight years old and is no longer new. I appeal to all the State governments that they should give full importance to elementary education and if any defects are found in the Operation Blackboard programme those should be rectified and the programme implemented. The essence of our policy is that we would not have any substandard institutions in our country. Some people can be backward, some sections and some areas can be backward but no educational institution should be backward. We have, therefore, standardised everything. We have given a complete list of things required in every primary school. We are making every effort that each primary school in each development block should be scrutinised to find out what deficiency is there and that will be removed. The Centre is spending crores of rupees to achieve that standard under Operation Blackboard.

The States are also following the programme. I appeal to them to ensure that this base of the educational pyramid is strengthened and our effort should be directed to that end. Likewise, there are deficiencies in our Regional Engineering colleges many of which have 20 or 25 year old machines and there are other shortages which must be removed. We will attend to them and the base has to be attended to by the States. Our Education Policy says that at both ends special attention should be paid.

I announced a few days ago that from the next Five Year Plan we should spend 6 per cent of the GDP, nothing less, taking the total expenditure on education incurred by the Centre and the States together. This would make our educational programme excellent beyond all comparison. We will implement this decision of the Government of India from the next Plan. You will see that the

education imparted to the coming generations of students would be of a very high order. We will make every effort to make the standard of education as high as possible. There would be no resource crunch. For the past 25 or 30 years there has been a demand that 6 per cent of the GDP should be spent on education but we were not able to do it because of the resource crunch. Now we have decided from the next Plan onwards we will earmark 6 per cent of the GDP for education and we will not spend that money on anything else. This is a landmark in the educational history of India.

Improving Quality of Life through Education

I JOIN ARJUN Singhji, in welcoming you all to this important conference. I have always felt that this conference was a little overdue and I am glad that it is taking place today.

Ever since Planning began in 1950, we have been striving towards universalisation of elementary education and total literacy. Considerable progress has been made over these years in spreading literacy and creating educational opportunities. Nevertheless, we all recognise that to achieve the goal of education for all, we still have a long way to go. The time has come to squarely face the challenge of reaching the goals of universalisation of elementary education and universal literacy with determination and resolve. Education is a concurrent subject. This envisages a sharing of responsibility between

the Union Government and States. The Centre and the States will have to act together and in concert, if we are to achieve our objective.

Two months ago, India was privileged to host the Education for All Summit of nine high population countries in New Delhi. The Summit sent out a clear message of international solidarity in the fight against illiteracy. It concluded with the signing of a historic document which heralds a new dawn—a dawn of hope. The Delhi Declaration is a reaffirmation of our faith and commitment to achieve education for all. The Summit also agreed upon a Framework of Action, which contains the detailed strategies for making our population fully literate by the turn of the century or at the earliest possible moment. This conference is being held to consider these strategies and actions we are required to take.

In my statement at the EFA Summit, I felt confident that given the determination, we can reach the 6 per cent GDP level of total investment on education in India by the turn of the century. The national resolve to ensure that expenditure on education is 6 per cent of the GDP—was first enunciated in the National Policy on Education in 1968 and was reiterated in the National Policy of 1986 and again when the Policy was updated in 1992. Although, expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP has increased from 2.4 per cent in 1969-70 to about 3.7 per cent as of now, the time has come for us to redeem our national resolve.

These decisions have been taken from time to time. But, looking back, I feel that they have been taken after the Plans were formulated. So, it was not possible to change the Plan so drastically as to include such large amounts and upset all other programmes. Fortunately, this time when I made this statement we were still in the middle of the Eighth Plan and the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, was present there. I looked at him and almost told him that now it was for him while formulating the Ninth Plan to set apart this amount of 6 per cent whatever it comes to, for education and not to touch it for any other purpose. This is the only way of doing it. It will adjust itself. Once you take a decision you are determined to have this money for

education and only then you will be able to manage the rest. It has been our unfortunate experience for the last forty years that whenever there was any difficulty, any adversity necessitating cuts in the expenditure, the expenditure on education got the first cut. It has been stopped for some years now but it had become more or less endemic and this will have to be stopped. This has stopped but should not be allowed to be started again. It is a policy and this policy has to be taken as seriously as any other policy we decide upon.

The nation as a whole must assume the responsibility of providing the resource support for our national goals. To achieve this target, all our States would also need to properly enhance the share of education in their own budgets. I would request the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission to consider this issue in depth so that measures are taken to gradually increase the allocation to the required level. The increase in outlay on education would also depend on the pace at which our budgetary support to sectors like power, oil, industry etc. could be taken over by non-governmental investment channels.

This is what I have been stressing right from the beginning. Right from the time when we made a reorientation of our economic policy, I have been saying publicly, privately, in Parliament, in other countries that the infrastructure that we have been spreading from budgetary sources all these years, needs to be taken over by some other agency, non-governmental agency, so that that money which we collect from the people may be released for the programmes for human resource development which have been suffering so far because all the money goes to these big, huge, massive projects. So, that fortunately is fructifying today.

I feel very happy to tell you that my visits to Germany and Davos recently and a continuous stream of possible investors from abroad convince me that this substitution is more than possible now. Recently we have cleared as many as seven mega projects in the power sector. You can imagine seven mega projects in the power sector not any longer requiring budgetary support from us could mean how much

money is being released and that money or a bulk of that money would have to go to education, health and other programmes of human resource development. And this substitution if it works well, and I am sure it is already working well, we have to still streamline it a little further; this will solve the problem of human resource development to a large extent.

Simultaneously, it is necessary to consider alternative means for augmenting the resources flowing into the education sector, more importantly of encouraging private initiative and involvement of the local community. In this context the recommendations of the NDC Committee on literacy, regarding levy of education cess, as Arjun Singhji has pointed out, needs to be considered.

We had education cess in the old days. In the District Board days in some States there was an education cess levied. Now there is nothing new. Since it has been given up for a long time it sounds new, it seems new today, but it is really not new. Education cess was in vogue in some States long ago. Even before independence it was in vogue. Therefore, we are not really asking for anything new. What was already there, it needs to be streamlined and if all of you agree, we could easily collect it and people will see that this is being collected for a very viable purpose, a purpose which is visible, it is available to them in their own village and that is how it has to be organised.

Raising sufficient resources is only one side of the coin. Equally important is the need for proper application of these resources and for their optimal utilisation. Governmental machinery and educational management have to gear up considerably to ensure that there is no waste.

Now, in this connection educational management is not an ordinary thing that anybody can do. We have a whole big institute on educational management in the country working here and the specific and the specialised aspects of educational management are being imparted to educational administrators and I think there is a lot of improvement in the administration of education in the last few decades.

When we take resources from the community, our responsibility in this regard is increased. Economy and thrift should be the guidelines of our spending on education and the return should be more than commensurate with the input. For this purpose, States would need to prepare a rigorous and well conceived perspective plan for the next seven to eight years ensuring complementarity in resource allocation and utilisation covering all sectors and levels of education.

In the context of the substantial efforts that have to be put in and the progress that we have to make, the management of the educational structure and process will become of critical importance. It is not only a question of supply of textbooks, conduct of examinations and operation of the academic calendar. It is management in its entirety. The issue of decentralised management of education becomes important, particularly in relation to universalisation of elementary education.

Now, the Committee has given some very good, bright ideas, as Arjun Singhji just pointed out. The Committee has recommended joint emphasis on elementary education and adult education and greater coordination in the delivery systems of the two sub-sectors. Now, how you will be able to do this. I have no idea because the areas are rather distant and different. Now, how you will coordinate, how you will have a single command or a coordinated command, I am not just able to imagine but you will certainly come up with some ideas. The systems of delivery for elementary education, adult education and non-formal education need to function under the integrated system. So, this is something which I am stressing most because I find it not an easy matter to do. But it is important in the sense that these are inter-related.

The Programme of Adult Literacy is a dwindling programme. It is going to be a tapering Programme. Say, after ten or fifteen years when the drop-out rate in the schools becomes zero or comes near to zero, there is no need for you to take up anyone at the adult stage and start educating him then. Therefore, these two are inter-dependent. To the extent you succeed in stopping drop-out at the primary level you will be saving the money and the effort and everything later which has to be devoted and is being devoted today for adult literacy. What you

may have in lieu of adult literacy at that stage is something which you can consider later but since the two aspects are very much inter-related, the coordination which has been suggested by the Committee becomes relevant in that respect. I still do not know how to bring it about. You please consider this and come up with something concrete on this and it will be useful.

A new initiative called District Primary Education Programme, the total literacy campaigns currently in implementation in 258 districts of the country also reflect this strategy. Now, another thing, which the Committee has brought out and which I am very much impressed by, is where you start a really successful total literacy programme at the adult level the urge for education in general at the primary level also increases, it comes up. It is something like an automatic increase in the interest of the people because an adult being educated, at some point feels, if he is being taught A, B and C now why is it that his child should be deprived of this. So, the urge, the desire to send children to school automatically increases by the successful implementation of the Adult Literacy Programme. This interconnection also is very important. This has been pointed out by the Committee. We have to take full advantage of this particular interlinkage, while motivating the adult to come to the Adult School you will have to motivate him also to send his child to the school in the village wherever it is available. So, this programme should go hand in hand.

It is the people's involvement in educational reconstruction which will make the real difference. There is no better way to ensure accountability than an awakened and 'demanding community'. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments unfold a new era of empowering the local communities to assume greater responsibilities in many development areas including education. You have before you the recommendations of the Central Board of Education Committee on decentralised management structures in education. These are not mandatory, but they provide useful norms as well as a framework. You may adapt them to suit your situational imperatives.

At the cutting edge of the educational delivery system stands the teacher. A very critical component of the educational management

will, therefore, be improving the standard of teachers' education, thereby improving teachers' competence and performance. Simultaneously we need to improve teachers' motivation. One of the ways to do this is to ensure their full involvement in the educational process. There is no better way to unshackle and enliven the mind of the child than by unleashing the creative energies of the teacher.

It is being increasingly recognised that education is not merely to endow societies and people with vocational and employment capacity and skills. I would like you to go into this once again. It is a multi-dimensional instrument for improving the quality of life for all sections of society. This we have been saying for a long long time. Almost every Commission on Education has said this. But when coming to implementation we fall back on the more concrete things like good education or good examination and things like that. So, this is perceived as something multidimensional, the other dimensions, I am afraid, are not really coming to the fore and they are not receiving the attention which they deserve. I think it is time that educationists think of this and think of weaving this into the educational system effectively. Education must be perceived as a galvanizing force in social dynamics and development. While literacy by itself contributes greatly to consciousness about issues germane to the well-being of an individual, it cannot be treated in isolation.

Kapil Dev : a Cricket Legend

CRICKET AND POLITICS have a great deal in common in our country. Both have large numbers of active participants. Both deal with crowds. Both accept cheering and jeering.

It is good that I have got this opportunity to felicitate a person who today represents Indian cricket, who has got to the top of the rung through sheer hard work and will. It is said that greatness is 98 per cent perspiration and two per cent inspiration. Both are important. Even if you perspire hundred per cent, but if you don't have that two per cent inspiration, you cannot achieve greatness. You may have very great inspiration but if you don't perspire and work hard then you remain where you are. So, Kapil is a combination of both and the right combination I should say. What makes me very happy is that in this generation he has become a legend. Perhaps he has much more to achieve in cricket and I am sure that he will do so.

Cricket has been a craze in India for a long time. I remember in our own young days whenever there was a cricket team visiting India from abroad we only knew about who scored how many runs; we forgot our lessons but remembered the scores very well indeed—who broke which record, where, how many wickets and all that, almost like a walking encyclopedia of cricket statistics. So, it has caught the imagination of the people. Although it used to take five days or six days for Test matches and probably we didn't have much to do in those days, we were attending to cricket all the time. It is the same thing going on, the same craze for cricket, same love for cricket and that is what sustains the game in a country. If people don't like it, they don't have the patience to sit for five days or six days and sometimes some batsmen don't score at all and don't get out, that is also one of the important things; so we used to say 'either hit out or get out'. This was one of the slogans in the old days. And, when a great cricketer like C.K. Naidu was at the crease, people used to ask him, 'Come on ! We

Speech at a special felicitation function to honour Kapil Dev for his achievements in Cricket, New Delhi, 21 February 1994

want a sixer, we want a sixer,' as they ask Kapil Dev these days. So, this is something of an interaction between the player and the crowd and, as I said, it is the same thing in politics—if we are saying something very boring, the people will start leaving the place. So, that is how it is.

I feel very happy about the Indian score, Indian cricket, the turn it has taken after 1985 or 1986 when our late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi started this shot in the arm to sports in this country. From Rs. 20 crore in one Plan he enhanced it to Rs. 200 crore in the next Plan. It is something unprecedented in this country or any country that a particular activity with the sheer force of the Prime Minister, pressure of the Prime Minister, desire of the Prime Minister should jump ten times. Since then, we have never looked back.

We have created a lot of infrastructure in this country. Lot more needs to be created, there is hardly any denying that fact. And, I am sure that we will continue to create the infrastructure. But the greatest infrastructure are the players themselves, the participants themselves. Rajivji actually said that unless you make it a part of the curriculum in the educational system, this is never going to prosper. You just cannot have lateral entries into higher rungs. That is one of the important things which he brought about and as a result of which we find a totally different atmosphere in sports and games today in this country.

I am very happy to be here with you, younger people, adoring their hero. He is my hero also because I am a cricket enthusiast as much as you are and I think I should have missed many classes to be able to witness Test matches; so in no way I am less than any of those who are doing the same thing these days. In the offices we know that no work takes place—in any case, they say, normally no work takes place—but on the day of the match there is hardly any work; there will be useful work by listening to the commentaries or going to the cricket matches themselves. So, the kind of enthusiasm that we have in this country for cricket should endure. I hope it will endure. I am sure that we will be able to have stars of this calibre who will make the interest of the people in the game endure, because if you don't produce great players there is a tendency for the interest to sag. That should not

happen and I am sure that it will not happen. Kapil is a guarantee that it will not happen.

I once again thank you for having given me this opportunity to join you at this very pleasant function, a proud function, a moment of pride for the whole country and for all of us. I congratulate him once again. I bless him from the bottom of my heart for greater and greater achievements in the future.

Need to Boost Hindi as Link Language

THE EARLIER MEETINGS of Central Hindi Committee have been meaningful. The discussions held in these meetings and the decisions taken by the Committee have all helped to give proper direction and speed for the implementation of Official Language Policy.

Our first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said once that all the regional languages of different states are the national languages. When he said this, the people perhaps did not relish it. Earlier they thought that only one language was the national language and the rest were the regional languages. He also said that all the languages are national languages and Hindi should be developed as a link language. This ended the controversy which later on possibly could have generated many misunderstandings. I am happy that this controversy has ended and the issue, how Hindi should be developed as a link language, is receiving our attention now. So far as I know, those who deliberated on it, those who are working on it have given fruitful suggestions and

all these suggestions are being implemented. This helped Hindi develop as a link language. Hindi developed as a literary language or as an independent language. The link language and the independent language have their separate entities. There is a difference between the two. Today we would like to know, see and hear about Hindi being developed as the link language in this meeting. We would also like to give some suggestions and endeavour to take action on it in future.

While developing a link language, we should know very well about the languages among which the link language has got links and what relationship should it have with them. When somebody goes for business, he carries a language along and when he deals with others, he tries to learn their language a bit and includes certain words of their language in his own language or tries to put certain words of his own language into theirs. This exchange leads to good relationship. The language progresses but the issue of fostering relationship assumes special significance. How should it develop, is another important point. How should the capacity of a language be developed as a link language, is a matter to be seen. Those who are working on it, should also know it. Whenever the link language develops, it carries all other languages along. This has been mentioned in the Constitution too. In the Constitution, the word link language does not figure but it involves full connotations of the link language. Therefore, we should lay stress on the link language exclusively and think what is being done and what is not being done about it.

It was said for many years that we have got typewriters in English, we have everything in English, we do not have anything in Hindi, how will it progress then? Now it is a matter of pleasure that our scientists, our technicians have made enormous efforts for this. I know that unprecedented efforts have been made in our languages, including Hindi during the last ten years. Today we can say that there is no language in India which cannot be computerised, which cannot be run on computers and on one single software. Combining all the languages, if one common script is developed then by pressing different buttons of the software, we can have different languages. These are the facilities which we have today and it is presumed that perhaps no other country

of the third world possesses this facility. It was indeed a difficult task but they have done it successfully. After these, whatever gadgets were required, all those were developed in Hindi and are being developed in other languages as well because there also we would be requiring the help of the gadgets. I understand that as far as the question of technical development is concerned, it is encouraging. We have developed to our requirements and possibilities are that we may go still further. It is a work which perhaps would not be hindered. If some small snags appear here and there, they can be removed.

On the one hand we have all the requisite resources, on the other we have the will to develop the link language. It is a matter of thinking as to how much progress we have made combining these two together. The Planning Commission constituted a working group while preparing the blue prints of the Eighth Five Year Plan for the development and publicity of the schemes of official language. As a result of this, many programmes have been chalked out and are being implemented in a planned manner. These programmes include Hindi training facilities, facilities for Hindi translation, development of technical equipment etc.

I have to say about the facility of translation that we are slightly lagging behind. The sort of translation facility we have is not of good standard not only in our official works but in technical matters and in literature also. For this reason, we feel hesitant to get our good literary works translated in other languages and present the same before the people. We suffer from a complex that it is not properly done. Whatever we are doing, is not proper. What we have to do then? We will have to think about it. Some workshops have been organised by Sahitya Akademi and efforts have been made by other institutions as well but I can still say with a fair amount of confidence that we are still not fully competent as regards translation of Hindi into other languages and into foreign languages or translation of any Indian language into foreign languages. The extent we should have progressed in this, has not been achieved.

If there has been some success in translation, it has been in Russian language in which almost all the good works have been translated and there they established a large publication house. I do not

know whether there is further improvement in it or not. So long this publication house existed, there was good exchange of the languages. I myself saw there that they had not left any good book or novel without translation in Russian language. In fact, they have made much progress. I am going there shortly. I will see to it and will enquire about the position of this programme. But I tell you that it declined even when Soviet Russia existed. I enquired from them about this slackness. They replied that when you yourself do not bother about your own languages then why should we bother about them? You use English, we also use English. What necessity do we have to translate some Malayalam novel in our Russian language and that too with great strain. We do not need it. If you feel that you can continue with English then we too will not have any problem. Our work will be all the more easy. It is only due to this that this programme has gone into the background. You think about it. I was the Human Resource Minister at that time. Hearing all this, I was surprised and thought for a while that there was something lacking in us. We have gone closer to English. I do not consider it good or bad but I do say that it has resulted in gradual decrease of the interest of those who had the fascination to know about our languages, to know something about our literary works or translating our literary works in countries where it once existed on a very large scale. I have put it before you, as I think it is very serious.

We have to develop our languages further and in this process of developing them, whatever we do, it ultimately gives an impression that we have not bothered about our own languages. We care about English and in a way depend on it. What effect will it have on our languages. What will be the status of our prominent literary personalities? What will be the fate of literature? It is a different matter that you send your official note in Russian or English or in any other language but the language is not exclusively for official purposes. Language is a part of life and it leaves its impact on the whole life. If the dimension and depth of that language progressively decreases, where will the language remain then. The literary personalities will have to think about it. The Government should also think about it and those who are involved in it should think about it. I want to clarify this before you. It is my experience. I am putting it before you as I have heard from them. As

such I do not consider it wrong. Whatever reality they saw, they alerted us with that. For this, I will appreciate them.

Whatever routine business this meeting is supposed to formalise, that you should do but in addition to this, I would like to mention two points before you. The first is that there is a difference in the process if a language is to be developed as the link language and one which is to be developed as a language for literature. After knowing this difference, we should move ahead. Sahitya Akademi and other institutions are engaged in developing languages in the form of literature. We should have liaison with them but the most important job of ours is to examine how Hindi should be developed as the link language. The link language should be such that people speaking different languages should find it easy to understand. If it is difficult and people take much time in comprehending it then this language would not progress as the link language. It is obvious that whatever does not suit us, we discard it instantly. The language to be a link language should have accommodating capacity. This is the need of the day.

The second point is that we are far behind in the matter of translation and the love which we had shown earlier to our languages and to boost them have progressively vanished. Mahatma Gandhi once took initiative and helped develop the feeling in the large part of the country to the effect that there should be one language and we should include it in the VIIIth Schedule. Last year, three more languages were added to it. And now I do not know the demand is, perhaps, for 10 or 15 languages. How long will this list become is not known. Is it going to be of much benefit by inclusion of the languages in the VIII Schedule? I am unable to understand this. If each dialect is taken as a separate language then where will Hindi stand? It is beyond my comprehension. So if the intention is to discourage or eliminate Hindi, then it is better to give the status of full fledged language to all the dialects and sub-languages of Hindi. But I am not in favour of eliminating Hindi.

The Government of India and we all have to develop Hindi as a link language and as a language in the form of literature. If all these things are included in this task, then the matter will be complicated. We

have to think about it. We may not discuss it today but the question will remain as to how this problem can be solved. Finally I want to say only this much that whatever suggestions you want to give, you give that and whatever has been done on it earlier, discuss it, review it. Whatever shortcomings are there tell them freely and then act accordingly.

V

Social Welfare

Welfare of Minorities

I AM HAPPY to meet you and inaugurate this conference. The Tanzeem is doing a very good job and I wish it would do better. Not only that, it should touch the hearts of the people as well.

Passing resolutions, organising conferences or having deliberations without any follow up is of no use. Conferences without proper mental frame-work, without follow up actions, are meaningless. This won't work. Such isolated efforts won't serve any purpose. Any organisation or conference should form a link of a chain-effort so that when the work progresses, you get more energy. Our speed accelerates without any brake. Hence, good organisations need to do more work.

As far as the government is concerned, its programmes bear a *Sarkari* stamp, an image of casualness and apathy, hence these programmes fail to evoke enthusiasm and inspiration. This is the way the government works. I am trying to change this trend, and in doing so, it is possible I may not get total success. The government's job cannot have the spirit of a private job. What we have to do is to change the attitude of the people, to end their apathy. People should be made to think that government's job is not government's job alone. It is the job of the masses and unless the masses are involved in it, the work will not move on.

We have just given statutory status to the Minorities Commission. Now the Commission can summon people, record evidences and its recommendations can be given serious consideration.

Be it minorities, backward classes or other communities, the main reason of their backwardness is lack of education. Hence, we are giving priority for providing education facilities to them. We are arranging for their coaching. We have announced a number of programmes. This Financial Corporation is one such step. This will be

of immense help to the youths of the minority communities for a number of jobs.

A new legislation is coming up for the Waqf, eliminating the shortcomings of the earlier legislation. This will ensure proper utilisation of the Waqf's funds and prevention of other malpractices. You will see many welcome changes in the new legislation.

These are all government programmes. We have a definite programme for communal harmony which is already being implemented.

But I am not here to reiterate all these things. I have to say something more. People have heard of all these things. Sometimes people believe, sometimes they don't. I know that our programmes are treated with much cynicism. We are trying to infuse some credibility in our programmes, to instil some vigour in them—to make people believe in them.

I try to ensure that a programme announced by the Prime Minister should not be taken lightly. These programmes are not just for clapping and forgetting. I do not want to let it happen.

I have made a new system. I have given exclusive charge to some officers to monitor the follow up action on Government announcements, their implications and implementation. We have relieved them of all other administrative responsibilities. We have asked them just to monitor these things. Earlier, the things were not like that. Any officer, any joint secretary looked after a number of jobs. Monitoring the implementation of Government announcements comprised one of their jobs, which usually got neglected.

This is the new thing, we have done. Now I can, at least, ask them, I can monitor the things. If work is not done, I can seek explanation. I can ask about the progress on the job and decide about the balance to be done by us particularly jobs pertaining to State governments. The papers are cleared from Centre but get stuck at

State government level due to lack of response. People do not know where the papers got stuck. They are just concerned that they got stuck.

So, our endeavour is: the pace of work should not get stuck, the benefits should reach to the grass roots level—to the intended beneficiaries. And, as I have told you, we have taken the first step in this direction.

India's Development through Progress of Women

IT IS A matter of great pleasure for me to be here today to inaugurate this Annual Science Exhibition on the theme 'Women in India's Development'. A science exhibition on the role of women in India's development on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's birth anniversary gives a commendable overview of some of the most important aspects of his contribution to the building of modern India. It is a fitting tribute to his memory and an appropriate compliment to women in India.

We have come a long way on the road to economic development and social progress. The role of women in the quiet revolution that is taking place in our society in this century, especially after independence has been universally recognised and appreciated. Women have a position of equality in law and have established themselves in every field. It is widely recognised now by social scientists that all development is intricately linked with the development of women and their position in the society. They are the upholders of the traditions and the

progenitors of change. They transmit to the children what they have learnt in their most impressionable age. That is how the heritage goes on, absorbing whatever changes time takes. Our decline coincided with the decline of the state of women. As Panditji said way back in 1945 in a message to the U.P. Conference of the All India Women's Conference—“Fall of India from a high status was partly at least due to deterioration of the status and position of women in india.” Thus the position of women is a significant indicator of the level of maturity and development of a society.

Panditji attached great importance to carrying forward the movement of emancipation of women, which had been given a great fillip by Mahatma Gandhi. He had seen the participation of women in the national freedom struggle and believed that such participation raised their status in increasing the opportunities for them. Half a century later the position of women in India has changed dramatically. They have not only developed themselves but have also been instrumental in accelerating the country's development. They have established themselves as equal partners in shaping the destiny of our country. In the rural areas they always contributed significantly to the economy. It is not very well known in the cities how much economic power women have in the rural society. It is, really, a very good study for those, who want to undertake it, not everywhere though, not in all societies. The productive part of the society has this distinct feature, not that part of society, which depends only on the male to earn a living, while the woman sits at home and tends the children. That is one part of society. The other part is, as I just said, that part where the woman goes out into the fields. She supervises all the agricultural operations while the man is sitting somewhere smoking or drinking. These are the hard facts. Those who come from villages know this. So it is not as if we are doing anything new. It has been there in the society. The women have the real power of supervising economic activity. Where that is not there, she is relegated to the kitchen or the children. This is very logical and you will find it.

However, I am acutely aware of the fact that whatever may have been our achievements so far, a great deal remains to be done. The

position of women is still far from satisfactory. A number of governmental policies and programmes have been evolved for women in recent times to enable them to widen the scope of their contribution to the country's development. Government policies have been formulated to improve the status of women through a combination of programmes of actions and increasing their social awareness.

A three-pronged approach is being followed—improving the economic status of women, providing a range of support services for them and improving the levels of awareness, systematisation of the society and the administration system. Vision of Nehruji has guided the evolution of Government's development policy for women in the post-independence period. We have steadily expanded these programmes and improved them and have developed the initial welfare orientation into a dynamic developmental one with the objective of empowering women in our society so that they can contribute to our national, social, economic and political fabric on equal footing.

In recent times the Government has taken many initiatives to improve the social status, financial independence and political representation of women. The “Mahila Samriddhi Yojana” launched last month; the “National Commission for Women” and the “Rashtriya Mahila Kosh” are some of the significant steps taken. The “Mahila Samriddhi Yojana” is receiving a very enthusiastic response from rural women. I am really overwhelmed by this response. I am starting to suspect that men are behind it. I will have to go deeper into the matter because lakhs and lakhs of post office savings accounts are being opened. The result is very good. It looks the real gain is the sense of financial self-reliance that a woman gets when she has her own independent savings account. To the high brow citizen this may look rather common place. What is there so great about opening an account? Anyone can open one. Yes, that is how it looks in the city, in the areas where this is a common practice. But those who understand the mind of a dependent person can readily understand the glow of self-confidence on a rural illiterate woman's face when she realises that she has at least become an economic personality in her own right. I am convinced that this small step, howsoever unspectacular, carries within

it a whole world of change in the outlook and status of one half of India's population.

Another significant step taken recently has been the enactment of the 73rd Constitution Amendment, which reserves one-third seats in Panchayati Raj institutions for women at all levels. This Amendment ensures the creation of a vast cadre of grass roots women leaders. Their number would exceed eight lakhs. Such a large cadre of grass roots women leaders will be a powerful catalyst for change. We have to ensure that they are trained in the working of these institutions and made aware of their duties and responsibilities. I am firmly of the view that these steps will go a long way in bringing women out of the confines of their homes to play a more active role in public life and in the lives of villages.

However, the Government's role has been supplemented by the society, the shaping of social attitudes and the societal obligation with respect to Indian women is a massive task before us. While, the Government will remain sensitive and responsive to the problems of women's development, it is also necessary for societal attitudes to be shaped and reoriented appropriately. In this the efforts of the Government sector, the academic institutions and non-governmental organisations have to be coordinated to maximise results. Even more than all these, a massive effort of social reforms needs to be undertaken both independently and as part of the programme of political and other institutions. There is already a spate of legislation on a variety of subjects for attaining women's emancipation and empowerment. But this does not appear to be commensurate with the social reforms activity to get the laws implemented at the ground level. Not only the support of the institutions, but the endorsement of the society to these reforms is much more important than just having the law. I can cite the example of "Sati" for instance. Now we had a very hard fight against those who were trying to either divert attention or dilute the law. Rajivji led the fight and finally we had our way. The women's case was vindicated. There the matter ended. After that I am not aware of any follow up action by way of either social reform or endorsement of this law by the people of those areas where this custom did prevail. The

point is whether this has been accepted and endorsed by the people is something, I am not able to say yes with any amount of certainty. There does not appear to be considerable amount of social reform activity to get the laws implemented at the ground level. It does no credit to the country if its Parliament keeps passing laws that are observed only in their breach. This flaw has to be removed at the earliest.

I remember that even in the first quarter of this century there was a very great effort of social reforms in Maharashtra, in Andhra Pradesh and the southern parts and also in northern India. In fact, it started in the last century with Raja Rammohun Roy, Swami Dayanand, Veereshlingam Pantulu, Ranade, etc. Why don't we see such illustrious reformers today? They were supplementing the political struggle, the political effort to a very great extent, in fact, some people held the view that until the social reform is complete, the political reforms or whatever changes you want, are going to be distorted, they are not going to be real things. Perhaps they will give you results but the results will be lopsided. This has happened to some extent. So, it is absolutely necessary to match political change with social reform because the society has to be able to absorb the changes that you are bringing about. I think it needs no greater explanation, it is very obvious that these two things should go together. So I think, as part of the programme of political party or other organisation, what is happening in the society, what needs to be done to remove all the flaws, all the irregularities, all that the society is afflicted with, have to go hand in hand.

I have said this many times and many others have said this but the point is, our parties have not yet taken up this matter. Perhaps if political parties undertake first, others will follow, and there will be a kind of coordinated effort at the society's level as well as at the political level, at the Legislature's level to bring about a change in which all the three wings are interested.

I hope, this Exhibition will inspire our children to acquire a greater sense of equality among boys and girls. As the future of the nation they have to grow up with a better realisation of the respect that

a civilized society should have for women. I also hope that the Exhibition will help in increasing the awareness of the role not only of women in India's development but also that of our great leader in bringing this about.

Voluntary Organisations— Catalysts to Development

I AM HAPPY that a large number of leading non-government organisations drawn from various parts of the country are meeting here for a two-day consultation with the representatives of several key development ministries in the social sector. I had long wanted this kind of a meeting where the non-government organisations and secretaries to the Government of India and Members of the Planning Commission could meet to understand one another so as to arrive at workable methods of cooperating closely at the grass roots level, perhaps, at all levels.

Many of you would recall that I had addressed a large gathering of non-government organisations in a seminar here in Delhi in December 1991, which the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) had convened. In that meeting I had offered to withdraw the government from certain areas altogether, say, from a whole block, provided the non-government voluntary organisations would take over the responsibility of implementing all the development programmes in such areas. I do not think that anybody took my suggestion, for I do not seem to have heard from any non-government

organisation, subsequently, on that proposal, because I know that there are problems in an approach of that kind, for, the only viable way we can accelerate development, particularly in the social sector in the rural areas is not by the government or the non-government organisations functioning in isolation, but by their functioning together. This is the real problem—functioning together is difficult, functioning in isolation is more difficult; this is the dilemma you are facing.

Our goal of uplifting the poor can be achieved only by all of us working together, in the field, in the villages and towns, however much we may be dissatisfied with each other's work and style. So, whenever we have a discussion, the main topic is, how is the other fellow not behaving well. I agree that the officials and the non-officials have their own job-charts given to them and if the official goes about collecting garlands and the non-officials start interpreting rules, then the whole thing will be a failure. The non-official will have to represent the people and their aspirations; the official will have to stick to the system and say this is possible, the other thing can be possible only under certain circumstances, while the third thing, I am sorry sir, it is just not possible. Then you go to the upper levels, go to the Prime Minister, go to the Chief Minister, go to the Legislature and if you find that it is absolutely essential for the welfare of the people how do you find a way of making it possible, which is not possible at the moment. I don't see any difficulty if we understand our roles in harmonising the roles and bringing about the result that we all want. So, willy-nilly you have got to go back to the method of working together howsoever difficult it might be, howsoever sometimes irritating it maybe. What is quite clear to me is that unless all the resources available to us—human, material and organisational—are mobilised and pooled together and efficiently directed to areas and programmes which need them most, early eradication of poverty is not possible. The government, the non-government organisations, people's representatives, people's institutions like the Panchayati Raj must all bend their energies towards making this possible, in a spirit of cooperation and accommodation. And these efforts must address women's issues, in particular, to the fullest extent.

In all this we have to remember that the people must occupy the centre-stage. At all times they should be the focus of all that we aim to do. Therefore, when I talk of a participatory approach to development, I have in mind an approach where the people would be helped to help themselves. In other words, we should envisage a situation in our country where people would deal with their problems on their own in the not too distant a future, without having to depend upon outside agencies. In the ultimate analysis, the people should not merely change their masters; people should be their own masters.

As far as the government is concerned this concept of withdrawal is equally important, perhaps even more important. While the government would always have a lead role where people's problems are concerned, the government should also know where to stop. Formulation of policies; programmes and schemes consistent with such policies; provision of adequate resources for programmes—all this is the legitimate duty of the government. Ensuring that implementation is consistent with the policy objectives, is also the duty of the government. However, the flexibility required to take initiatives in given situations is always lacking in the functioning of the government. This quite often defeats the very purpose of the programmes designed for the people. We are changing all this but in a number of areas we should take the assistance of the non-government organisations (NGOs) to effect delivery of the benefits intended by such programmes. Not only this, we have to go even farther. NGOs being the agents of delivery, instead of the government, need not by itself make things better for the people. What is important is preparing the people.

This, the government cannot do. If something is coming, it comes in the shape of a government order, it goes down to the Collector, it goes down to the BDO, it goes down to the Panchayat who represents the government there and then it becomes a government programme. No one understands what it is, no one can make head or tail of it. Now, preparing the people for what the government really wants to do, may be six months later, three months later, is what the NGOs can do most effectively. No one else can do it. Even the Panchayats cannot do it. Because they are going to be involved in the

actual implementation, it will take some time for them to understand. But the NGOs can understand these things in advance and prepare the minds of the people.

I think in tomorrow's context, it is this preparation which is going to be the most important aspect of the NGOs programme. You will be much better equipped to go to the people, tell them what is coming and perhaps give us the feed back. If people don't like it at all or some part of it, you might as well come to the government and say 'look, you are trying to do this, the people may not like it, do it the other way, do it some other way'. So, a meaningful dialogue between the NGOs and the government is possible before government launches something. A meaningful interaction with the people is possible for the NGOs. It is not possible for the government directly in most cases and, therefore, there is the catalytic role which NGOs have to undertake.

We have talked about the catalytic role without understanding clearly, what it means. Now at least, we have to understand what it doesn't mean; that is the most important thing. We will understand what it means, if even before understanding what it means, we understand what it doesn't mean. If you avoid that, you do the right thing and come to the right conclusion, go to the right result, the right result ensues. Social mobilisation, enabling and empowering the people to receive fully and fruitfully what is intended for them is the central issue in all developments. That social mobilisation can be done only by agencies that are not bureaucratic. In this task of preparing the people to receive effectively what is intended for them, the NGOs have a crucial part to play. In that context, the NGOs become agents of change as well. Therefore, for me the role of the NGOs is a role both as agents of delivery and as agents of change. Perhaps, the 'agents of delivery' are going to be the Panchayats. The agents of the total change, which starts with education, motivation for that work will have to be done almost exclusively by the NGOs at least in advance of schemes coming to the people at the grass roots level.

People cannot be empowered unless they are organised. They should be organised in their own areas, in their own villages or in a

group of villages. Obviously, if such organisation has to be constructive, it should take place around issues that are of concern to the people in their everyday lives. It could be issues like equal wages for men and women, minimum wages, nutrition, drinking water, treatment in a primary health centre and a host of similar rights guaranteed to the people by the various laws and development schemes of the country. Today, in many parts of our country, people need some kind of outside help to organise themselves. It would be somewhat unrealistic to think that the government servants who are in charge of various programmes would organise them. In fact, they should not. They should leave the people to themselves. If they start organising the people, the whole thing becomes very artificial. This is why the NGOs should step in. We have now the Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 under which we would have self-governing Panchayats all over the country elected by the people. Socially disadvantaged sections of people like the SCs, STs and OBCs and women will all now have adequate representation in these bodies.

As many as 29 areas of development including agriculture, watershed development, small-scale industries, rural housing, drinking water, primary health care, fuel and fodder, public distribution system and primary, secondary and adult education would all now be in the hands of the Panchayats. This is a revolutionary step that we have taken and if the element of organisation is also added, then we have a situation where people would be empowered to benefit from all these schemes, both by way of planning and implementation. Here, the non-government organisations, as different from even the Panchayati Raj bodies, have a crucial part as external catalysts. This is what I was trying to emphasize.

Don't ask me what you have to do when the Panchayats come. These are the questions always hurled at us for the last thirty years—*Agar yeh Panchayat Samiti aagayi, wahan ek President saab baithey huye hain, jeep leke ghoomteh hain, hamara kya kaam hai?*—these are the questions. This motivation of the people, working among the people, not getting into clash with anyone, this is the crux of the whole thing. Now, if you start taking the village as a unit, the Panchayat as

the unit, the question will become even more acute. You see, the Sarpanch has some power which he wields at the village level. Now he should be able to appreciate the work of NGOs at the village level. Otherwise, he will say this is another parallel Sarpanch coming and interfering with his work. I am warning you, this is going to happen at the village level, even more that it happened at the block and other levels. Please be aware of this. Please be clear, when the Panchayat's power ends, your persuasive power begins so that the Panchayat does not misunderstand you as a meddler. This is very important.

The challenge, therefore, before the NGOs is clear, and quite big. The question, then, before you is how to take full advantage of the environment that the government has created through formulation of policies and schemes that are helpful to the poor, particularly the rural poor take advantage of the decentralised institutions created at grass roots levels and work in harmony with such institutions so as to empower the poor to take full advantage of the resources available to them both as part of the environment in which they live and what the government provides.

Already the Panchayati Raj institutions are likely to come into clash with the Legislature. The MLA and the Panchayat Samiti President are already two poles clashing. Then there are the other parties, the political parties, and then the NGOs and network of people's elected organisations whose power is as good as mine. The Sarpanch is more powerful than the Prime Minister of India—if you analyse it—in his own field. He is directly elected, while the Prime Minister of India is only appointed by the President of India. You see, even in the appointment there is a qualitative difference. The Sarpanch is more powerful, he has a greater element of democracy in his making than the Prime Minister has. Please analyse this. This is very important. You cannot ignore a Sarpanch from tomorrow but work with him. We all have to work with him. I cannot ignore him. That should be enough for you to understand that you cannot ignore him.

I hope that the non-government organisations all over the country would take keen interest in the progress of these programmes and help in their successful implementation, wholeheartedly.

I am aware that we have a few thousand voluntary organisations in our country working in the urban and rural areas, some of them in very remote areas. At the same time I am also aware that given the fact that India has five lakh villages the spread of voluntary organisations is, indeed, limited. I have occasion to see the directory of voluntary organisations compiled by the Planning Commission and CAPART and the areas in which these organisations are functioning. I also know that particular States in India have an ethos of voluntary work while in some of the other States it is very rudimentary. While commending the work being done by all these organisations, I would like to take this opportunity to invite more and more people of goodwill to come forward to work in the rural areas so that the concept of voluntarism spreads in a big way in this country. Industrial and business houses have both an opportunity and obligation to take the lead and help in this respect.

The main reason why I wanted a conference of this kind to be convened, is to encourage interaction between officers of the government and NGOs and others so as to develop models of participatory development at the grass roots level. This is absolutely important. Before anything happens, you must have at least a rough and ready model. You can go on changing it later, you can go on refining it later, but if nobody knows what he is supposed to do in a given situation, then you only start with confusion and it will continue. Please, at this conference come to some conclusions—they may not be perfect but some conclusions—of how an NGO has to work at different levels, particularly the village level, the Panchayat level. Where do you have the unit? Would you like the NGO to have a bigger unit than the Panchayat so that the biases of the Panchayat, the prejudices of the local Panchayat are not reflected in the NGO. Is that feasible? Is that desirable? Or, do you want an NGO absolutely coterminus with the Panchayat? There are some advantage there also. So, what do you want? What is the unit to be? At what level do you want to make it the operational unit? Operationally, where do you want the NGO to be fixed normally? There will be abnormal situations, exceptional situations.

Then, work-wise where do you want the NGO to assist more? Tomorrow, for instance, the Nyaya Panchayats are coming. By the way, let me tell you that the Nyaya Panchayat is the most powerful body constitutionally speaking, because it is a combination of the Legislature and the Executive and also the Judiciary. Where we cannot interfere, we cannot even talk to each other—it is supposed to be interference—there they can not only interfere, interact, they can do anything. What the Legislature does, the Panchayat can do in its own area. What is the Legislature supposed to do. They will fix the rates of taxation in the area as Parliament also fixes. The Panchayat can do it. They don't have a general body, they don't have anything. The 10 or 15 or 20 members of the Panchayat can do exactly what 800 people in Parliament do. Now, it is the Legislature. The Executive, it is absolutely clear. Judiciary also. If the judicial component comes at the Panchayat level, it is going to be part of the Panchayat or working closely to the Panchayat. Now, with this very very powerful body how is the NGO to interact? Can you help them in one of these things or all of these things and to what extent? So, look at the picture that is emerging in the near future, very near future, and be ready for it. Have your own responses been properly defined and if you are discussing these things for two days, I am sure, something useful will emerge.

I wish your deliberations all success. But I have told you that two days should be very carefully devoted to certain specific and pointed areas of consideration. Please concentrate on them. Come up with something which is meaningful and helps the government, helps you and helps everybody, and particularly the grass roots level institutions to function better, to deliver goods to the people in a more efficient way and organise the people in such a way that the integrative factors of all this programme come out in bold relief and do not get lost in local squabbles and the centrifugal tendencies that every small unit of society always has to some extent at whatever level you really want to see.

Ensuring the Rights of Future Generations

I AM GLAD to be associated with this Conference which seeks to explore the possibilities of law as an agent to shape the future of children, environment and human health. Law as an instrument of social engineering has taken tremendous strides over the years. It is a flexible instrument and is endowed with both creative and moulding power. However, in order to be effective it has to be constantly reassessed in the changing social framework and the change in goals.

Every nation, developed or developing, links its future with the status of the child. It is a truism to assert that in the ultimate analysis it is childhood that holds the potential and also sets the limit to the future development of a society. The child of today cannot develop into a responsible and productive member of tomorrow's society unless an environment which is conducive to his social and physical health is assured to him. The gains of economic development on which so much stress is being laid today cannot be stabilized and sustained unless they are accompanied by commensurate opportunities for human development.

India is fully alive to the seminal importance of the role of the child in its quest for development. The Constitutional provisions on children, particularly those enshrined in the Directive Principles of State Policy form the bedrock of government's policy in consonance with the desires of the founding fathers of the Constitution. But here, I regret to point out that the founding fathers of the Constitution in spite of their best effort, in spite of tremendous pressure being brought in the Constituent Assembly, were not able to ban child labour altogether in our Constitution. Those were the limitations. Those were the circumstances in which they had to settle for something less than total banning. Can we do it today? Is it possible for today's society in 1994, just about

six years before entering the next millenium? Can we do today what in 1950 our founding fathers in spite of their best efforts, in spite of their best intentions, were not able to do. This is the question. They also form the guidelines for planning and implementing programmes for the welfare and development of children and have been incorporated in the national policy for children.

Health is a basic need and a fundamental human right. Providing for health care to ensure the holistic development of all, including children, is an enormous and challenging task before developing countries. Wide disparities between the rich and the poor, between urban and rural areas, gender discrimination, and widespread illiteracy are factors that contribute to the threat to the well-being of the child. Government has to make a concerted effort to provide comprehensive health care sevices.

Primary health care, particularly for mothers and children, has to be given due priority in developing a health care system. The experience in many countries has demonstrated that strategies based on inculcating awareness and conscientiousness among the people provide sustainable solutions to the complex problems in the area of health. The success of our family welfare programme to control the increase in population is greatly dependent on the primary health care programme.

It is significant to note that the scope of law in ensuring health in our country is being widened. The earlier legislative effort was concentrated on preventing food adulteration and regulating the preparation of drugs and cosmetics. Now new legal challenges are being thrown up by such medical innovations as artificial insemination, organ transplant, surrogate motherhood and the like. Certain basic preventive and protective measures like the need to check infections transmissible through blood have assumed an urgency which was not there till the AIDS epidemic hit the world. Consumers are now demanding that the members of the medical profession should be made accountable for their acts of omission and commission. This is actually happening in all the developed countries of the world. The doctor there is always under

the threat of being sued and perhaps losing his life's earnings if he is found to be negligent. This has not yet started in India, but it is only a question of time before the consciousness of the people, the awakening of the consumers, the awakening of the patients, their knowledge about what has been done by the doctor—in fact, much will depend on what the patient thinks ought to have been done and was not done. If he is ignorant, then he cannot really go to a court because the evidence is absent. So, all this is going to happen and our doctors will have to take care, take note of what is in store for them in case they are negligent. This is coming. The law has to take note of this social dynamics from time to time and provide the standard. Fortunately, this has already started happening.

The concern for the environment is often viewed as the concern for posterity, the future of our children, the well-being of the coming generations, the prospect of the decades and centuries that lie beyond here and now. This approach is, to say the least, short-sighted. The right approach to the environment is to view it in its cyclical timelessness. This is the law of eternity that has been ingrained in the traditions of nearly all civilizations, particularly ours. Any civilization that has tampered with nature's cycle of renewal has fallen by the wayside of history. This is the danger that the modern technological age has to avoid.

The ancient sages of India used their profound wisdom, intuition and powers of observation and understanding to establish the close interrelationship between human beings and the animate and inanimate beings around them. The *Ishopanishad* says:

“This universe is the creation of the Supreme Power meant for the benefit of all His creations. Each individual life-form, must, therefore, learn to enjoy its benefits by forming a part of the system in close relation with other species. Let not any one species encroach upon the other's rights.”

The principle of ‘Dharma’ in Indian thought affirms the interrelationship of human beings and the environment and the need to abide by the laws of nature.

One of our ancient saying goes, “It was for the sake of preservation, progress and well-being of creatures, including human beings”—human being is really nothing very special; it is just another creature of God—“that Dharma was created by the self created one, that is the *swayambhu*.”

Let us, in this forum, decide to respect the rights of the future generations to an equal share in the resources of the globe, and to discipline ourselves to use these resources sparingly. The best we can do to shape the future by using the strength of law is to frame such legal provisions that leave the resource base of the globe undepleted for the coming generations. Let us deliberate how we can manage our affairs and shape our laws in such a way that we give full opportunity for self development to our generation and at the same time provide the same opportunity to the coming generations also.

At this point, ladies and gentlemen, before concluding I would like to place before you the practical aspect of what this Conference is going to discuss.

As a legislator of a long enough standing I must say that where legislation is passed but not implemented, it creates a situation where the society goes into absolute disarray. To me legislation is a weapon. If the weapon doesn't work, it gets blunted and observed only in breach, where do I go, how do I do anything to change the society? Where legislation fails, the gun takes over. This has been our experience, sad experience for the last forty years. So, legislation is something very effective, very important, very crucial in the lives of people. It is not just a piece of law, which we pass by raising our hands. But it is something which needs to be nurtured, which needs to be followed up in every aspect of its implementation.

I will give you the example of the nineteen fifties. The Constitution said something about compulsory education, elementary education, primary education. In the first flush of the Constitution, the first flush of idealism engendered by the Constitution we all passed laws. I think they were passed in almost every State in India. I certainly

remember as a legislator the long discussions that we had, the very idealist kind of speeches that were made in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly for passing this law. What did the law say? It almost penalised every parent who failed to send his son or daughter to school. We were very happy after passing the law but I don't remember a single parent having ever been punished and the law having ever worked in the letter and in spirit in which it was passed. Social legislation is something extremely difficult to implement.

So is the case with environment. Our forest cover while we are talking of environment has been depleted from 18 per cent to 10 or 11 per cent today. Take the satellite pictures, they will show that while we are talking of something, what is being done is totally different, the opposite of it. It is a very sad story in this country.

But when there is a struggle for survival between man and a tree, probably man has the strength to destroy the tree and the law has not gathered strength to prevent him effectively from destroying the tree. It is that simple.

So, law has to be very forceful, very powerful and the overarching authority of the law should be established for, only then social and environmental legislation will really work.

So, I am expecting the legal luminaries at this Conference to come up with ideas which may help us in Parliament in making the laws that we pass, more effective. That is the great thing about this Conference that it is interdisciplinary, not each discipline talking about itself and not caring what the other has to say. So, this is what the special feature of this Conference is, and I would expect the recommendations of this Conference to be sensible as well as implementable. This is what I would expect this Conference to do because that is how we would be helping the Parliament of India and the legislators of India a great deal in doing their duty properly and getting it implemented.

Law, in its prescriptive and prohibitive forms, is a manifestation of the human desire to regulate social behaviour and move society

towards a desired goal. In the ultimate analysis, law must reflect our needs as well as our aspirations. We in India have always taken a pragmatic look at what law can do and what it ought to do. I hope that this Conference would crystallise ideas in this area. My best wishes for the success of your Conference.

VI

International Affairs

Common Indo-China Approach for Asian Resurgence

IT IS A great honour to be invited to speak at Beijing University, the foremost seat of education in the People's Republic of China. It is always a privilege to be amongst the faculty and students of an institution of learning with few parallels in the world. India's scriptures from times immemorial have perceived educational institutions as the epitome of the cultural and civilizational achievements of any society. As I commence my remarks, the words of the French philosopher Diderot about you, the Chinese people, come to my mind. He said, "These Asiatics are endowed with great antiquity, art, intellect, wisdom, policy and in their taste for philosophy and in their judgement they dispute the merit in these matters with the most enlightened peoples of Europe."

Others have described your society and your polity as a continuum which has existed for over 4000 years as an unparalleled achievement in human history.

My people and my civilization have also been so described by philosophers and historians. That out of the four or five thousand years of our continuity as civilizations, for nearly 2000 years, we have interacted with each other, provides the durable foundation for Sino-Indian relations.

Our remote cultural ties are best illustrated by the word *chinambar* (Chinese cloth) which occurs in Indian literature for many centuries. This means an old tradition of trade and commerce between the two countries. In addition to Huen-Tsang and Fa-Hien, Chinese marine travellers to India's Malabar Coast from olden times have left behind their impressions. So, it is with a deep sense of our historical and cultural closeness that I come to this gathering.

Speaking in a university with this history, one cannot but be aware of the large forces that shape our lives. It is universities like “Beida” in China and Shantiniketan in India which first contributed to the emancipation of thinking that was a necessary precondition to Asia's emergence half a century ago from the shadows of colonialism. This phenomenon, achieved through different means in India and China, resulted in similar ends. Both countries embarked upon an experiment without precedent in history, the rapid and fundamental transformation of large societies with strong indigenous roots. Both countries chose not to blindly imitate the path that had been travelled, much more slowly, by Europe during her mercantile transformation and industrial revolution. Our countries chose instead to modernise their economies and transform their societies in accordance with the ethos of our own peoples.

China chose one form of socialism. India chose another. Despite criticism by hindsight that abounds everywhere today, it is undeniable that the pioneering work of the fifties and early sixties in both countries laid the foundations for the rapid advances that we have recently been making. China has embarked upon a process of reform which has shown outstanding results over the last decade. India has more recently embarked upon economic reforms which have already begun showing results.

Though both China and India chose varied options, different socio-economic methods in their nation-building efforts, the objective was similar—the economic development of our societies and the well-being of our peoples. From having a predominantly agriculture-based economy, India today ranks among the important industrialised countries endowed with technological skills, trained manpower resources and a progressively modern economy. Our economy has been diversified and at the same time integrated in a way where different sectors of economic activity are being evolved in a balanced manner taking into account the factors of natural resources, demographic equilibrium and the norms of productivity and consumer satisfaction.

For the first time in recent times people in India and China are producing enough food to feed themselves. Grain import has become

a sophisticated option in which secondary economic considerations are relevant. The spectre of mass starvation, only too familiar to our forefathers for more than 100 years during the colonial and immediate post-colonial periods, no longer haunts our peoples. This is no small achievement; it has been done by the creative application of modern science by millions of peasants assisted by teams of dedicated scientists and field workers in our countries. In a sense, it is the continuance in the technological epoch of our separate traditions of farming, developed over the centuries by our two civilizations in their specific separate ways in indigenously developed methods of wider use of irrigation and also in the most economic utilisation of natural fertilizers.

This has enabled us today to pause for a moment and plan a more rewarding and richer pattern of life for our people. It is our shared aim to achieve in the 21st century, the ambitions of great men and women who gave so much for their people, many millennia ago.

Over the last two years especially, we have embarked on a restructuring of our economy on the basis of deregulation, liberalisation and modern management and marketing techniques. We have tried to build on the foundations laid during previous decades of economic development. The objective of the new reforms is to plan the economic future of India in a manner where the pressures of inflation and recession are resisted and where fiscal discipline and emphasis on increased productivity become practical norms. I must also point out that the processes of economic modernisation and reforms are being fashioned, taking into account all aspects of human existence and all ingredients which constitute the quality of life; the ingredients of literacy, health, shelter, required minimum incomes and environmental safety. That is what we call reform with a human face. And this is no idle expression.

Over and above all, our aim is to achieve an equilibrium between the encouragement of unfettered human endeavour on the one hand and the imperatives of distributive justice in a developing society on the other.

The choices made in the process are, no doubt, bold and impressive. But what is even more remarkable is the capacity that these two great nations with a heavy weight of history have shown to learn from their experiences and to adjust their thinking and policies to deal with reality. What gives me confidence for the future is, this ability to learn from experience that both India and China have displayed since they became masters of their own destinies.

The world today stands at a new watershed. We all see the symptoms of the far-fetching transformations that the world is undergoing. The end of the cold war, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the emergence of the new centres of power and structural adjustment of the world economy are all results of fundamental shifts in ways of thinking, technology and in the balance of socio-economic forces at national and regional levels. I see these changes as leading inexorably to a world where prosperity, and in course of time power, are more equally shared among the nations. The question that faces our two peoples is: How shall we deal with this rapid process of change?

At this crucial juncture in the changing international situation, the basic issues of peace, security and development are being approached with new terms of reference resulting from the pressures and changed attitudes that affect the whole world. We should deal with these issues with a vision of the universality of human endeavour, tempered by respect for socio-cultural diversities between different societies and civilizational entities, with a sense of justice and fair play. This needs great tolerance and the avoidance of confrontation and the willingness to cooperate. This is by no means an easy exercise. But the test of any ancient civilization consists in doing precisely this, by innovating appropriate methods of survival and progress, without forsaking basic values which make the real difference between life in all its splendour on the one hand, and mere physical existence on the other.

The need for a universal approach cannot be overemphasized. No major problem facing humankind today—particularly today when the world, roughly speaking, is unipolar politically and multipolar economically—can be resolved on a regional or sub-regional basis,

except where it is conceived of as an integral part of a universal endeavour. Peace, disarmament, environment, sustainable development—each one of these requires a global approach and the context of a global order. I believe that the guiding principles for the creation of the new international political and economic order should be economic security and political justice for each country, for each society. For this purpose, urgent endeavours are required for achieving general and complete disarmament in a non-discriminatory manner. Immediate and cooperative action should be taken by the international community to preserve the ecological balance in environment, to nurture and sustain human rights, not on the basis of intrusive and unilateral stipulations or external pressures, but on the basis of values shared by all societies and also respecting the diverse social and cultural traditions, which constitute the content and corpus of human rights in different societies. These efforts for dealing with significant issues have to be undertaken with the awareness that we live in a world of economic, social and ecological interdependence. No individual country or group of nations can address this issue single-handed. Our approach of necessity, has to be based on a harmonising of varying perspectives, varied needs and diverse approaches.

Our two countries are themselves emerging from certain aberrations in their relations into an era of normalcy and enhanced mutual understanding. We have taken several steps together in the last five years to improve communication and understanding between our governments, leaders and peoples.

Our trade has been growing, although there is much more that we can do in this area. We have resumed border trade last year, something that benefits the common man in both countries. These are, however, only small beginnings. I am confident that we have still to tap the full potential of the possibilities that exist for our two large economies to interact in the economic sphere. We could consider several modalities to realise this immense potential. Such cooperation in the economic sphere would not only lend further strength to our bilateral relations but would also contribute to economic cooperation in overall terms in Asia and in the rest of the world.

We have re-established consulates in Bombay and Shanghai, and the number of our nationals visiting each other's country has grown manifold. Equally significant is the fact that we have maintained the momentum of high level political dialogue between the leaders of our two countries. Your Premier was good enough to visit India in December 1991 and our President came to China in 1992. Even on issues that once divided us, we are agreed on the need for and manner of dealing with these questions. I am confident that if we both continue this process, our common border will continue to be a border of tranquillity.

Our bilateral relations are on the way towards achieving the stability, durability and good neighbourliness that both our peoples desire.

We, however, do not live in a vacuum no matter how large the space that we occupy. India and China are both agents of change and are also subject to the changes that are sweeping the world. Now that we have found ways of dealing with our bilateral issues, perhaps the time has come for us to evaluate the new world order that is emerging and to evolve a vision and strategy for the benefit of people throughout the vast continent of Asia. A general agreement on India-China strategy and approach on a series of issues could be conducive to an Asian resurgence.

What should this Asian resurgence consists of? It must include a vision of rising above our historical memories and prejudices and narrower local interests to achieve the greatest good of the largest number. We are both dedicated to doing so within our societies. We have already shown the ability to conceptualise the principles that should guide international relations when we, together, evolved the five principles of peaceful coexistence, or Panchsheel as they are known in India. These principles remain as valid today as they were when they were drafted.

The question is whether these principles can be realised, and whether an Asian resurgence can be achieved, in the context of the

larger international community to which we belong. An introspective response to this question can be no better than what Jawaharlal Nehru stated at the Asian Relations Conference on the 23rd March 1947. He said: "It was here (in Asia) that civilization began and man started on his unending adventures of life. Here, the mind of man searched unceasingly for truth, and the spirit of man shone like a beacon which lighted up the whole world. It is this dynamic Asia from which great streams of culture flowed in all directions that I am talking about. The vibrance and creativity of the Asian peoples can surely realise the principles and objectives which I mentioned."

Jawaharlal Nehru had a vision of Asia. He had also a vision of India and China in Asia and the world. This was not mere romanticism. His historically sensitive mind always went back to those early days when, in the first millennium of the modern era, our two civilizations, our two ways of thought, our different methods of articulating that thought came together in blinding flash of creative exuberance. The great Buddhist pilgrims and travellers who traversed the Himalayan passes did not achieve a mere feat of physical endurance or dedication to a great idea. They were among the great scholars in history who achieved an astonishing feat of cross-cultural and interlinguistic communication. In four or five generations the great works of Buddhist philosophy, mythology and literature were translated from Pali to the Chinese language. There are only two or three similar occurrences in the history of the human mind, the Greek-Arab encounter and the great rediscovery of philosophy in the 15th century in Europe which led to the renaissance. I thought it necessary to mention this in this moment of recapitulation of our long cultural dialogue. We have something to inspire us when we walk forward in our quest for a new understanding.

These memories are useful. All memories are useful if they are not permitted to rationalise present inaction. We, in our generation know that we cannot afford to relax until more than two billion people of our two countries, each man, woman, and child, has the opportunity to look forward to a decent life with dignity and freedom, not necessarily self-limiting luxuries. The resurgence of the Asian people after centuries of passivity is now beginning. We have learnt painfully to benefit from

our mistakes to choose between difficult options in development, in security, and in the rights of the individual. The Asian resurgence which Nehru so fondly believed in, has still to come but today, the objective conditions for such a resurgence are rapidly coming into being. In the last decade, Asia has shown that it can achieve socio-economic transformation rapidly, finding its own methods, without turning its back on the rest of the world. The question, really, is not whether Asia is ready for a resurgence. Asian resurgence is in fact already taking place. The need now is that Asian resurgence should expand into a vision of general happiness of the whole of humankind. In this vision, there would be no place for hegemony or exploitation, whether inside or outside the continent.

I do not underestimate the difficulties that face us in such a task. Fresh challenges are appearing. Can our fragile global ecological system stand the strains of development and subsistence? What will be the pattern of growth required for sustainable development? When disastrous technologies have all but destroyed the Earth's ecological balance, how do we reverse the trend set by affluent countries? And if, in the process, they swing to the other extreme and seek to choke off even the legitimate developmental needs of the developing countries, how can the latter resist the new suppressive process? How do we overcome the one-sided restrictions and limitations, sought to be imposed on our technologies and capacity for material and human resource development? These are questions that require the collective wisdom of mankind if satisfactory responses are to be found.

Twenty two years have passed since the People's Republic of China assumed her rightful place in the United Nations. For twenty two years before that India was proud to be among the forefront of nations that urged early acceptance of this just and correct principle. Today, as we approach the half century mark of the world body, our two countries, the largest in the world must do everything possible to ensure that this institution works towards the full realisation of the immense human potential inherent in man—a potential that transcends political and economic arrangements, necessary as they are, but addresses also the far larger concerns of want and hunger, ignorance and disease, that

still afflict so much of humankind. These preoccupations pauperise the worth of life. So, only a true liberation from these can allow our world to be truly a part of the free and liberated spirit of the century.

India and China have already made a beginning in cooperating in international fora on questions that relate to global environment. The agreement that we have signed during my visit provides that this cooperation, both bilaterally and internationally, will be intensified.

There are other threats to the emergence of a cooperative world order. They come from attempts to limit the ability of large numbers of mankind to harness modern technology and science to their own economic betterment. Discriminatory restrictive technology regimes, which seek to cloak, perhaps commercial self-interest, fall in this category. We, India and China, must work together with what we have for the benefit of our peoples.

Equally important is the need for real progress in nuclear disarmament. If there was any justification for the vast nuclear arsenals that certain powers maintain, that has long since ceased with the end of the cold war. These inhuman weapons must be declared illegal; the world must embark upon a time-bound and firm programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons whether declared or clandestine. India has made proposals for a new international consensus on nuclear disarmament, and has listed the steps through which this can be achieved without affecting the genuine security interests of most countries.

Why is this an important area of human endeavour? Unless we secure peace, countries will continue to waste precious resources, talent and effort which could better be utilised to promote national well-being. India has long ago made a clear choice. I do not think that there is another instance where with security needs such as India's, and remaining outside all alliance systems, any country spends as little as India does on defence.

But the greatest hurdle against the establishment of a cooperative world order is the assumption that there is only one way of running an

economy. Both India and China are too large as economies, and too diverse in other respects, to be fitted into the strait-jacket of economic models that might have worked for smaller, homogenous entities. You are seeking what you call a socialist market economy, developed with Chinese characteristics, which takes into account your own genius and conditions. The remarkable progress that you have achieved in this experiment is evident to the world. We too are seeking to free our economy while utilising the creative genius and energy of our people. Our results so far have been heartening. The prospect of our success seems to arouse unwarranted apprehensions. New advocacies to prevent the free exchange of ideas are being presented to developing countries. Our answer, in India, as a democracy, is that we should permit the circulation of ideas, out of which the country chooses and adopts what it thinks, it needs. We are also sanguine about the wisdom of our people who will see through what is not in their interest, no matter how attractively packaged.

It is in this circulation and exchange of ideas that universities have a major role and historical responsibility. The ties between India and China were formed over a thousand years ago by the exchange of ideas, at a time when it was much more difficult to establish contact. One is humbled when one thinks of the dedication of a Fa-Hien who spent fourteen years of travelling in order to bring back his precious load of books to China. Compared to him we are in a fortunate position, yet we do not accomplish even a fraction of what he did.

There is another tremendous benefit which these great monks gave us. Their travel chronicles provide one of the few available pictures of a situation in India at that distant time. So, when we meet here today in these hallowed precincts, we are only trying to recapture the first carefree rapture of that earlier encounter. In our own time, Rabindranath Tagore realised the significance of the university in international understanding. This was why he founded the Cheena Bhavan, the house of Chinese culture, in his own university in Santiniketan, Visva Bharati. One of its earlier students, Vasudev Gokhale, has written how at this University, for “the first time, after a lapse of a few centuries, a handful of Indians, sitting in an academic

institution, attempted once more to break through the tough linguistic barriers that had estranged friendly neighbours.”

We are at the threshold of a new century. There is an old saying that he who predicts the future is rash, even if he tells the truth. Despite this, I venture to say that Asia could come into its full stature and attain its full destiny in the coming century if India and China work together to make it so. Kautilya once said that the “welfare of a State depends on an active foreign policy.” He was also clear that “strength is power and happiness is the objective.” While strength is power and happiness is the objective, this purposiveness has to be tempered by a capacity for detachment and an inner willingness to believe in selfless endeavour. The great Chinese philosopher Lao Tse expressed this admirably when he said: “All things in nature work silently; they come into being possessing nothing. They fulfil their functions and make no claim on things, all creatures alike do their work and then we see them subside. When they reach full bloom, each returns to its origin, returning to origin means rest, means fulfilment of destiny. This reversion is an eternal law and to know this law is wisdom.”

I would now like to say a few words about the academic world, about the universities in both countries. I have just said that India and China after a long period of misunderstanding are now emerging once again into an era of mutual comprehension.

It is hardly realised that one full generation has been fed in both countries on misapprehensions and misunderstanding. 1962 to 1988, one full generation has been fed with ideas, which did not make a friendship and a bright future jointly for the two countries. It has fallen to our lot now to undo that. What happened during those 25 years has to be undone. And you and I cannot do it, people of our generation cannot do it; it is these boys and girls who would have to do it.

So, I want a massive programme of students from India and China visiting each other's country, a massive programme, thousands of students if we can make it, because that is the only way of undoing whatever happened during those unfortunate years of misunderstanding.

I put it to you that the universities in India and China have this great responsibility cast on them today. You were good enough to say that you led a delegation of university presidents from China to India last year, we welcomed you. We would like to welcome more and more of the university community, leaders of the universities in China to India and in turn send your counterparts to China. I do not see any other way of fostering this absolute, complete mutual comprehension between India and China. Without these we will not be able to do much at governmental level alone.

On this note I would like to conclude my address offering you and, perhaps, determining within the country that we will also do the same. I will see what we can do because this has not happened between India and any other country. This is a special task. This special task has to be handled by the Government, by the people, by industrialists, by every one in every walk of life, but most essentially, most prominently in the academic circles by moulding the young minds of the 21st century. These are the minds of the 21st century, they are going to enter the 21st century, they will have to behave in such a way and hand-over to their successors, a relationship between India and China, apart from the world, which is transmitted to further generations and all of them, India and China, the coming generations, come closer and enter the 22nd century not with the doubts, not with the half knowledge with which they are entering the 21st century, but with fuller comprehension, fuller sympathy, empathy for each other and a sense of doing things in the Asian context, in the world context, jointly with full appreciation of what we are doing. This should be our aim, this should be our programme.

On this very happy note, I would like to thank you once again for having given me this opportunity to address this gathering of youngsters here. I am sure that they will prove worthy of the trust that their country places in them as well as their counterparts in India, who I am sure will do the same.



Inspecting the guard of honour, Paro, Bhutan, 21 August 1993



*With King Jigme Singye Wangchuk of Bhutan, Paro,
21 August 1993*



*With the Prime Minister of China, Mr Li Peng, Beijing,
6 September 1993*



*A Chinese girl presenting a bouquet, Great Hall of People,
Beijing, 6 September 1993*



*Conferring with the President of China, Mr Jiang Zemin,
Beijing, 7 September 1993*



Going round the Luoyang Museum, China, 8 September 1993



*With the President of Republic of Korea, Mr Kim Young-Sam,
Seoul, 10 September 1993*



*With the Prime Minister of Republic of Korea, Mr Hwang In Sung,
Seoul, 10 September 1993*



Addressing the joint meeting of Korea-India, India-Korea Joint Business Councils, Seoul, 10 September 1993



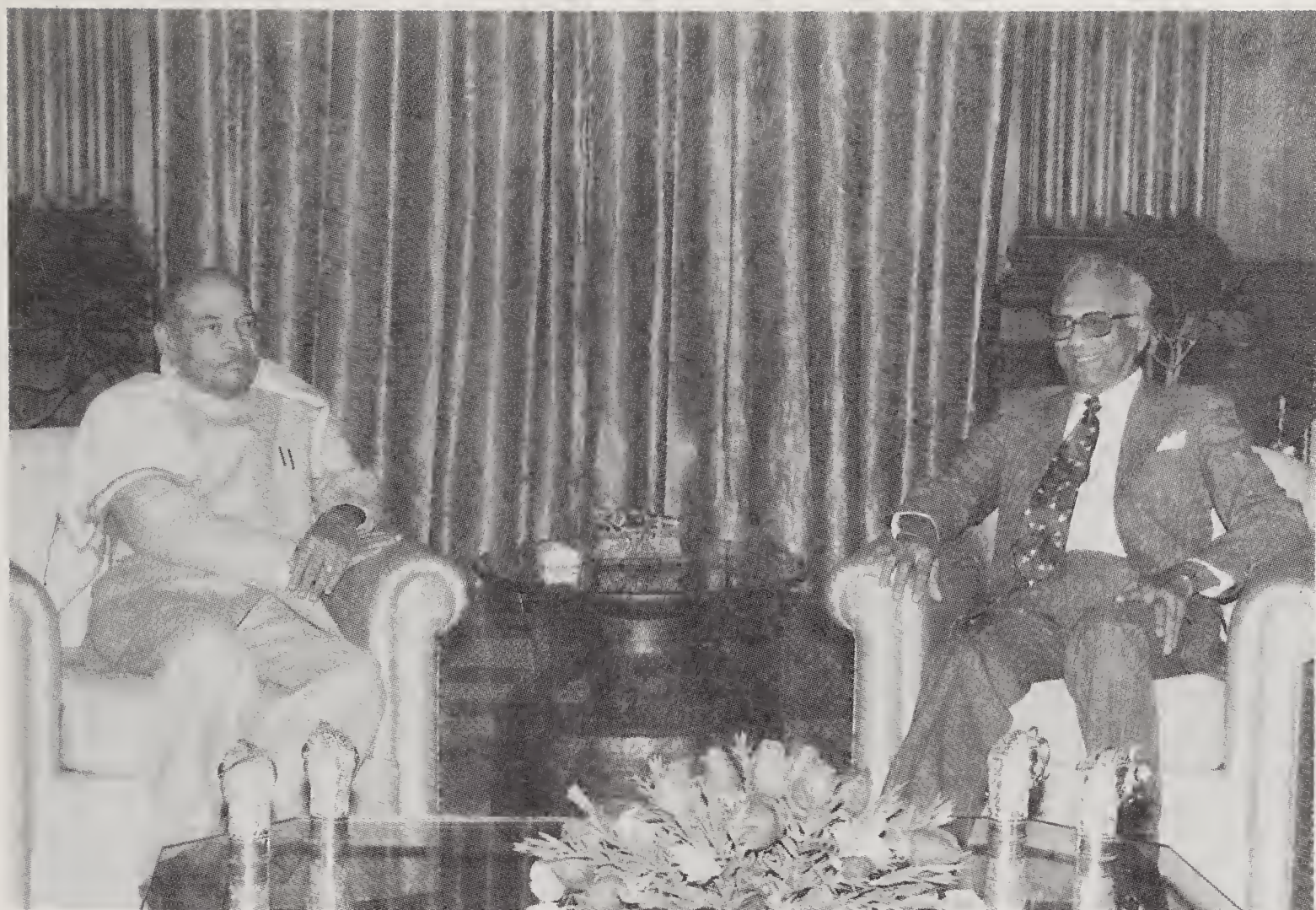
Conferring with the President of Iran, Mr Hojatolislam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Tehran, 20 September 1993



*With the President of Ireland, Mrs Mary Robinson,
New Delhi, 27 September 1993*



*With King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden,
-New Delhi, 11 October 1993*



*With the President of Guyana, Dr Cheddi Berret Jagan,
New Delhi, 27 December 1993*



*In conversation with the President of Uzbekistan,
Mr I.A. Karimov, New Delhi, 3 January 1994*



*Receiving the Foreign Minister of Italy, Prof Beniamino Andreatta,
New Delhi, 4 January 1994*



*Conferring with the Secretary General of SAARC, Mr Yadav Kant
Silwal, New Delhi, 20 January 1994*



*Addressing the concluding session of the World Economic Forum,
Davos, Switzerland, 2 February 1994*



*With German Chancellor, Dr Helmut Kohl, Bonn,
Germany, 3 February 1994*



*With the President of Germany, Dr Richard Von Weizsacker,
Berlin, 4 February 1994*



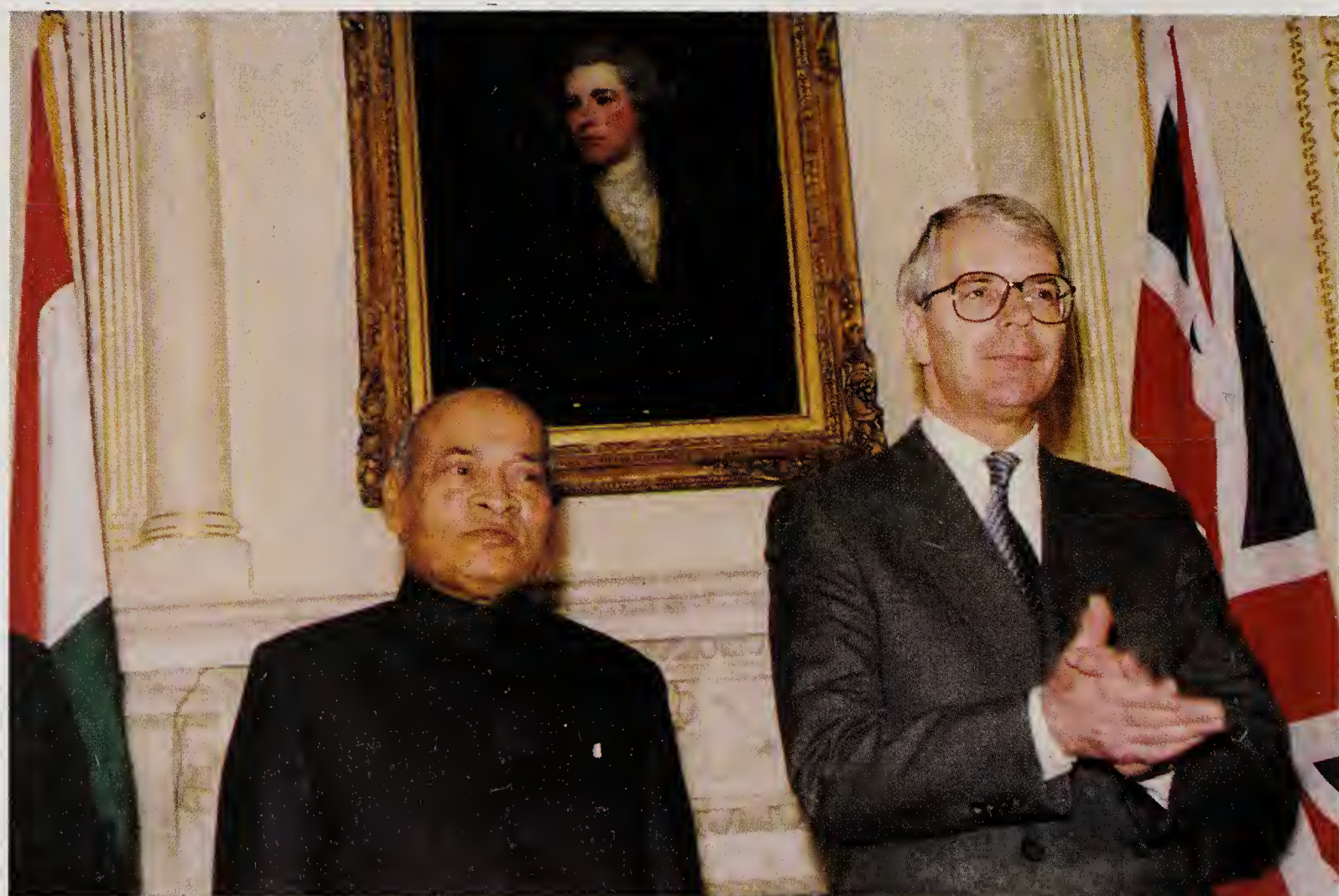
*Going round the Pergamon Museum, Berlin,
Germany, 5 February 1994*



*With Members of Thai Parliamentary Delegation,
New Delhi, 22 February 1994*



*With the President of Republic of Poland, Mr Lech Walesa,
New Delhi, 4 March 1994*



*With the British Prime Minister, Mr John Major, 10 Downing
Street, London, 14 March 1994*



*With British Minister for Overseas Development Assistance,
Baroness Linda Chalker, London, 14 March 1994*



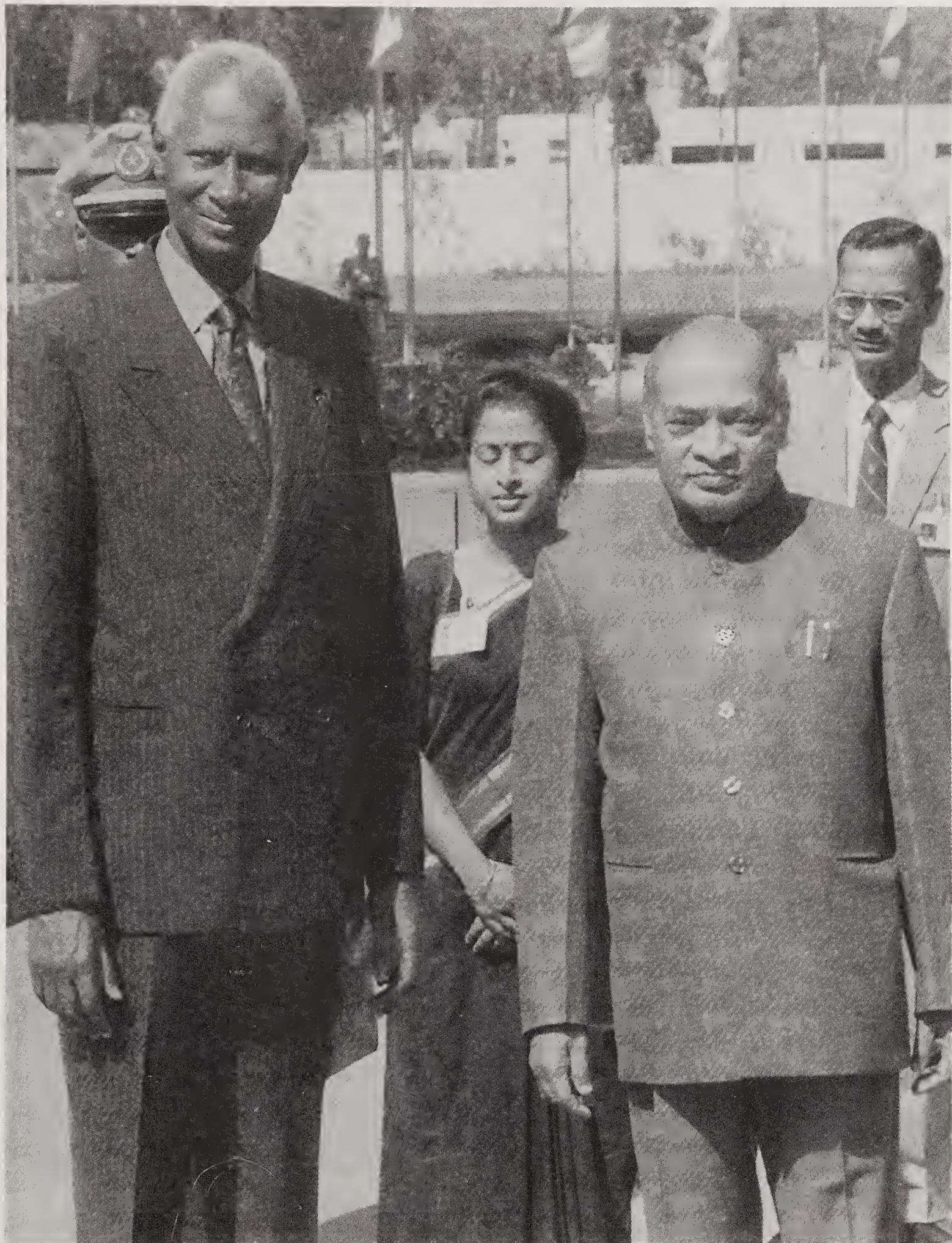
*With Commonwealth Secretary General, Mr Emeka Anyaoku,
London, 15 March 1994*



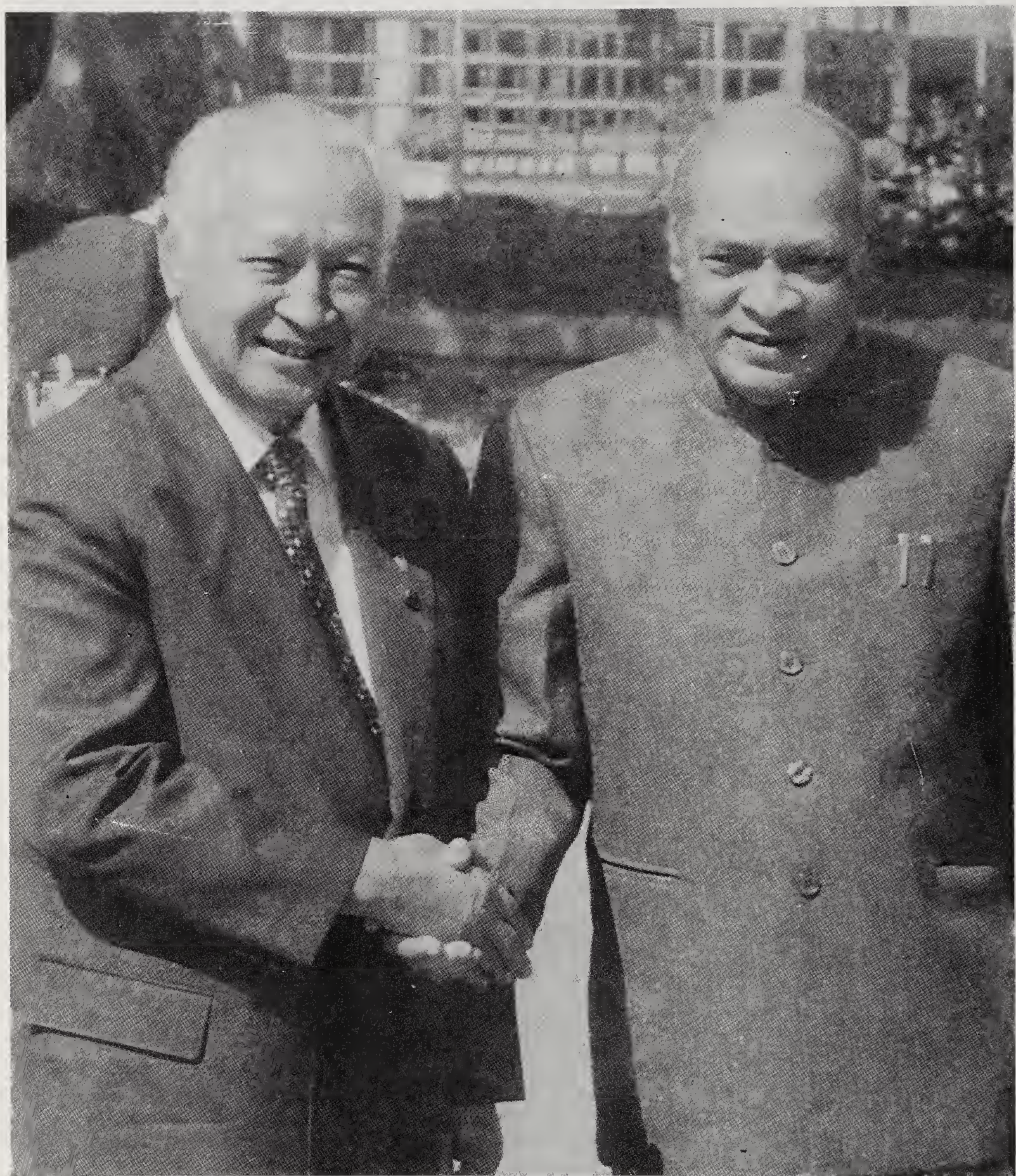
*Unveiling the portrait of late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, India House,
London, 16 March 1994*



*Conferring with the Foreign Minister of Republic of Cuba,
Mr Roberto Robaina, New Delhi, 18 March 1994*



*Receiving the President of Republic of Senegal, Mr Abdou Diouf,
New Delhi, 28 March 1994*



*Receiving the President of Indonesia, General Suharto,
New Delhi, 28 March 1994*

Indo - Korea Relations

I FEEL PRIVILEGED to be the first Prime Minister of India to visit your beautiful country, the land of morning calm. I would like to express my appreciation for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation during this visit.

Your Excellency quoted the Indian Nobel Prize winning poet, Rabindranath Tagore, who had written a poem about Korea in the dark days of Korean history in 1929, expressing his conviction that Korea's lamp, which had provided light to the East in its golden days, was waiting to be lit once again for the illumination of the East. How prophetic his words sound today, when the Republic of Korea—the “New Korea” that your Excellency spoke of—after its stunning economic achievements, and democratic transformation, takes its rightful and respected position in the international community of nations.

Though situated at different ends of Asia, India and Korea have known each other well from very early times. As your Excellency noted, Buddhism came to Korea from India via China, and forms an enduring common link between us. In more recent times, both India and Korea underwent the experience of occupation and colonization. Independence of both our countries was marked by partition and consequential conflicts. India was privileged to play a useful humanitarian role at the end of the Korean War in arranging the repatriation of thousands of suffering prisoners of war. Our common experience in history, and in the contemporary world, and increasing trade and economic exchange in recent years, have sustained our friendly and cordial bilateral relations since the independence of our two countries. The end of the cold war, and the revolutionary changes that this has brought about in the international situation, provides us with fresh opportunities to embark on a new era in the relationship between our two countries.

We have noted with admiration how the Republic of Korea together with the building up of a strong and vibrant economy, has been pursuing a dynamic, outward-looking foreign policy directed at strengthening its independent policies in favour of peace and security in North-East Asia. It has also worked towards the peaceful reunification of Korea through bilateral discussions and negotiations, with the DPRK, and striven to contribute to stability, economic development and peaceful cooperation in the Asia Pacific region. India is convinced that the early realisation of the Korean peoples' dreams for the peaceful emergence of a reunified, strong and prosperous Korea would be an important factor, not only for peace in the North-East Asia subregion, but for Asia and the world as a whole.

Common elements in our positions and approaches to the changing international situation, particularly in Asia, provide many opportunities for India and the Republic of Korea to work together to mutual benefit. During our very cordial and fruitful official talks this morning, President Kim and I agreed that the building up of a strong and diversified bilateral relationship between India and the Republic of Korea would benefit our two countries and also play an important and positive role in the Asia Pacific region. We have accordingly agreed on a series of measures to promote wide-ranging cooperation and exchanges in the political, economic and cultural fields, not only between the two Governments but also at the people to people level and among our respective business and academic sectors and scientific and specialised institutions. The Agreement on Tourism Cooperation and the Cultural Exchanges Programme signed during my visit should help to boost such exchanges. We look forward to working with our Korean friends to further deepen and widen this interaction between our two countries.

The sweeping reforms and liberalisation of the Indian economy over the last two years have set in firmly on the path of accelerated growth, rapid expansion of imports and exports and closer integration with the global economy, particularly with the dynamic economies of East and South-East Asia. We are committed to broadening and intensifying these reforms in the coming years. The Indian economy is the second largest in the developing world. Its 250-million strong

middle class provides a market for manufactured products which is potentially among the largest in the world. Private foreign investment in India has gone up sharply in the last two years to take advantage of the new opportunities, which are opening up. We would welcome more Korean business to come to India and take part in this process.

In conclusion, I would like to thank President Kim once again for the warm hospitality extended during my visit. I have already, during our discussions, extended a cordial invitation to President Kim to visit India at his earliest convenience, so that the process of dialogue and understanding that we have initiated at the higher-level becomes a regular feature of a dynamic India-ROK relationship.

Indo-Korea Economic Interaction

I AM VERY pleased to be able to participate in this lunch, hosted by the Presidents of the four premier Economic Organisations of the Republic of Korea and to meet the captains of Korean business and industry. The Republic of Korea has to its credit spectacular economic achievements in the last decade and a half and you all, no doubt, share the credit. I extend my hearty congratulations to you all on your success and convey my best wishes to you for even greater successes in the future.

India and the Republic of Korea have had a common quest namely to modernise backward, colonial economies and to achieve broad-based economic and social development. The conditions in the two countries, however, varied greatly, in terms of size, population and resources. Industrial growth in Korea meant looking for markets

Speech at the luncheon hosted by Presidents of Apex Economic Organisations of Republic of Korea, Seoul, 10 September 1993

outside the boundaries of the country and hence the model of export led growth. On the other hand, in India the size of the country and large population meant that there was a ready market inside the country for whatever we produced. As a matter of fact, we had a dependence on imports, and because of it our economists planned for self-reliance and growth that was primarily oriented towards the internal market. Republic of Korea had limited quantities of raw material and had to earn foreign exchange in order to be able to import the requirements. India has ample resources of raw materials to be able to sustain a vast industrial sector. Thus Republic of Korea went mostly for value-addition through manufacturing and processing while India had the option of developing industrial capacities in primary products. A strong trading option was inevitable for Korea but Indian progress aimed at import substitution. The models for growth differed and each country followed what was suitable to its conditions. Today, Republic of Korea is expecting to join the OCED by 1996. That is, indeed, a creditable achievement. In India we too have had substantial achievements.

We are self-sufficient in food and could become an exporter of foodgrains. Considering that we have a population of 850 million, this is not a small achievement. We have a mature, balanced, self-supporting and diversified industrial base. We have a reservoir of trained manpower. We have an extensive infrastructure of research and development institutions. India's scientific manpower today is perhaps the third largest in the world after the US and Russia. With these achievements notwithstanding the many set-backs we have had, both natural and man made, which impeded our growth from time to time, today we feel that we are getting into the reckoning in the global economic scene.

In order to hasten growth further, we have constantly been reviewing our economic policies. Over the time, many of the government controls and regulations had become dysfunctional. The strength achieved by the various sectors of the economy made it unnecessary to retain Government supervision. It was time to allow greater freedom of decision making to entrepreneurs in all sectors, based on the requirements of the market place to ensure faster development.

Accordingly, we have made sweeping changes. While many of you may be knowing about these, still, let me briefly recapitulate the major changes. Industrial licensing was abolished, except for a small list of hazardous and environmentally sensitive industries. The reservation for the public sector was drastically reduced and only six industries which have a strategic and social importance have been retained. Almost complete access to foreign technology was allowed and choices are related to wholly commercial considerations. Import control through licensing and other non-tariff measures was almost totally abolished. On account of balance of payment problem some restrictions were retained in consumer goods. These will also be removed as we progress. Similarly, import duties will be reduced in stages. The rupee was made convertible, for the present, on trade account but as the economy grows stronger we hope to become fully convertible soon. The policy on foreign investment was changed. We welcome foreign investment in almost all sectors of our economy. The clearance required are minimal. For example, foreign investment approvals upto 51 per cent equity in a specified list of 34 priority industries was made automatic; investment above 51 per cent was also permitted on a case by case basis through an expeditious mechanism, specially set up for the purpose. The procedure for Indian companies to invest abroad and thereby develop global links was streamlined and made easier. Foreign exchange regulations were modified to remove a number of earlier constraints on firms with foreign equity, operating in India and to make it easier for Indian firms to operate abroad. We signed the MIGA Convention for providing protection to foreign investment. Bilateral Investment Protection Agreements are also being negotiated. The tax system is being simplified, rationalised and the burden is being progressively reduced. Restructuring and reform of the banking sector has been started.

These new policies have started yielding encouraging results. Foreign investment proposals approved over the last two years total a little more than US \$ 3.5 billion. Exports have been rising at 28 per cent in US dollar terms during 1993. The exchange rate for the Indian rupee has held steady. The business mood in the Indian private sector is strongly upbeat and this is reflected in the stock markets. Two years

is obviously not enough to complete a programme of comprehensive structural reform, and we are conscious that several years of sustained efforts lie ahead of us. We need to sustain our efforts or rather make them more intensive. With increasing foreign participation and encouraging domestic response the outlook is optimistic. We are committed to identifying areas, where improvements are required and taking remedial steps immediately. I feel, the developments in the Indian economy today and even more in the coming years, will provide profitable opportunities for India's economic partners for trade, joint ventures and investment. Naturally those who establish themselves early in the Indian market will have the pick of business opportunities. Here lies both a challenge and an opportunity for the Korean businessmen, particularly for proven entrepreneurs like you. I invite you to come to India and partake the opportunities that now exist.

I am glad that a number of Indian businessmen and their Korean counterparts of the Indo-ROK Joint Business Council are here with us today. They have met earlier in the morning today and come up with a number of useful proposals and suggestions to expand Indo-ROK economic interaction. The JBC is part of the institutionalised set-up to expand information and awareness of the business opportunities in each other's country among the private sectors of India and Republic of Korea. Perhaps the four premier Economic Organisations of the Republic of Korea, who have arranged this lunch today, could undertake a thorough study of the Indian market to pinpoint the opportunities for Korean business in India. The Government of India and business organisations in India would be happy to provide cooperation and facilities for such a study. At the outset, it is clear that complementarities in the infrastructure sector provide scope for profitable interaction. In areas like shipbuilding, port construction, highway development, exploration and exploitation of oil, you have the expertise and resources and we have well identified demand. I also invite the organisations to send high level Korean business delegations to India as soon as possible, to obtain first hand information of the Indian markets and business opportunities.

India and Korea have known each other from very early times, when many Korean monks and scholars travelled to India and Indian monks to Korea, establishing an enduring bond in terms of a common Buddhist heritage. The famous Korean Haejos undertook a ten year visit to India in the eighth century A.D., and the record of his voyage provides an invaluable record of socio-economic conditions in India of that time. Today's Korea and India need many more Haejos, travelling both ways, building on our shared cultural heritage, but also bringing modern Korea's wisdom in production and manufacturing to India and expanding knowledge, awareness and understanding between our two Asian democracies.

During my very cordial and fruitful official talks today morning with the President, Mr Kim Young-Sam, we agreed that a strong, diversified bilateral relationship between India and the Republic of Korea would not only be to the mutual benefit of our two countries, but also be a positive development for economic cooperation and peace in the Asia Pacific region. The two Governments will, no doubt, take measure to facilitate cooperation on the desired lines. Today, I would urge you, the captains of the Korean industry, to play your part in making real the objective of a strong economic partnership that we have set for ourselves.

Indo-Iranian Cooperation for Stability in the Region

THIS IS PERHAPS the first occasion that the privilege has been accorded to the Head of Government of the Republic of India to address you. It is a distinct honour which I appreciate and acknowledge.

The most abiding element in Indo-Iranian relations, which I would say, is “not of an age but of all times,” is the continuum of the relationship between the peoples of Iran and India. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that during this significant visit, you have given me the opportunity of addressing the representatives of the people of Iran, the Members of the Majlis. My presence today amongst you affirms the historical solidity of our relations and the relevance of nurturing contemporary ties of friendship so essential for the welfare of our peoples, our two countries.

Our civilizations are ancient and therefore we, as peoples, are deeply aware of the cyclical ups and downs which affect the nations, and the world situation at large. However, at some such moments, figures of stature emerge in our societies to retrieve us from difficult and negative predicaments, and set us again on the path of righteousness, dynamism and progress within a socio-moral framework.

We in India perceived the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 and the inspiring direction which the late Imam Khomeini gave to the revolution, as a manifestation of the abiding verity in the existence of civilizations. India was among the first countries, not only in the region but in the world, to acknowledge the relevance and the validity of the Iranian revolution. The revered Imam reclaimed and reaffirmed the pristine values of Iranian society and made them a galvanizing force for national resurgence.

On behalf of the Parliament and the people of India, I wish you success in the multifaceted way in which you, the heirs to the resurgence, have embarked on a new journey of reconstruction. We convey our greetings and good wishes to you and through you, to the Government and the people of Iran.

In India, we are also engaged in a similar endeavour. Our efforts at national reconstruction within a pluralistic and democratic framework are imbued with the great socio-cultural values of all the major religions of the world. This fabric of the Indian nation is a matter of special importance and pride for us. That the interaction between the ancient Iranian and Indian civilizations was an important factor in the process, is a major event guiding policies and attitudes of the Indian people. That we have shared so much in the past provides the basis for our building a strong and durable bilateral relationship and friendship with Iran for the future.

Though the present conventional wisdom asserts that the end of the cold war has made the world less tense and more peaceful, the fact of the matter is that we live in a world of uncertainty. While the prospects of a nuclear holocaust may have receded, our world is beset with anxiety. A number of national and subregional conflicts are raging in different parts of the world at present. We have to deal with a world, in flux and turbulence. Our joint endeavours, our friendship and cooperation, I feel, will help us in dealing with the complexities and conflicts of our times.

There is a logical and firm basis for our building a close relationship for mutual understanding as well as for peace and stability in the region because, Iran and India share with each other the conviction that social progress and political stability can be achieved only on the basis of the will of our peoples and the moral and social values which have historically shaped and guided that will.

We believe that any world order in this closely knit international community of ours, should be structured on the basis of the equality of states, on non-interference in each other's affairs, on upholding the

territorial integrity of countries and, above all, on a politico-economic pattern wherein reason, equality of opportunity, fairplay in inter-state dealings without coercion of any kind prevail.

I have emphasized and re-articulated these principles because the international climate today remains difficult for developing countries. Our efforts at national consolidation, socio-economic and technological self-reliance are at times hampered by asymmetrical relations between the advanced and the less-developed countries and between the strong and the weak. To some extent, this asymmetry is endemic.

That is precisely why we should, at least now, find ways of remedying the situation. There should be a serious acknowledgement of the imperative of global interdependence. We have to act together purposively to structure the world order to meet this objective for the benefit of all.

When I speak of interdependence, I am reminded that there cannot be interdependence without true independence. You have been revolutionary activists and you realise that intensity of the people's desire for independence of choice and action. In India, visionaries and men of action like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru taught us that the genius of a people is released only when they are free. Their struggle for India's freedom and the manner in which they ignited the energies of India's vast millions are part of our cherished annals.

Global interdependence demands not only national independence and national self-respect but also international trust, understanding and cooperation. In the past, commerce and culture built splendid bridges between nations and between peoples. Are we going to see a world develop in which commerce and culture create chasms between nations? The signs point in both directions: exclusive groupings of nations on the one hand; on the other, the global communications network unifying the planet.

The point I make is this: wherever centrifugal tendencies are drawing nations away from one another, countries like ours, with our

historical experiences and traditions, with our languages belonging to the same transcontinental linguistic family, with thousands of families having migrated and settled in one country from the other through a variety of historical vicissitudes—with these unique features of interaction, we can play a significant role in generating centripetal and cooperative trends in the international community.

When you build bridges, chasms do not remain barriers. People cross the bridges to meet and work together. The India-Iran bridge, as I said earlier, is an ancient one. We have to jointly make it sturdy and strong again. Whether it is commerce or culture, science and technology or education, our cooperation will bring benefits to both of us and others as well.

I spoke a little while ago of asymmetries among nations. In the field of disarmament, or trade, or the environment, or the exploitation of the planet's limited resources in almost every field of human endeavour, the developing countries face special handicaps in attaining growth. Poverty, malnutrition and the spectre of violence often threaten their very existence, as we have seen in Somalia and elsewhere.

The increased globalisation that technological and other revolutions have brought about, largely lacks the elements of equity. This is mainly because of, what may be called, indiscriminate and mindless commercialisation. No sophistication in technology, however beneficial in itself, can solve the mass problems of humankind unless it is made available and affordable to everyone. Far from doing this, what is demanded of developing countries is to virtually remain at a low level of development for all time, to atone for the acts of over-exploitation of the earth's resources by the developed countries.

I am only giving this somewhat graphic example to make a point, namely, that global interdependence cannot be on the basis of discriminatory gradations of countries. And our world cannot expect to prosper if vast deserts of deprivation surround a few oases of abundance.

It is in this generic background and predilection that I assess Indo-Iranian relations and view their future. We are ancient societies endowed with long-standing social traditions determining our orientations for development and progress. The majority of our peoples and our economies are rural in character. Both our countries, while, wishing to nurture the old traditions and the socio-economic base, are also desirous of moving into the 21st century with adequate scientific and technological capacities.

This would require large-scale industrialisation and attract massive additional investment in infrastructure. While this would need to be done in the huge capital-intensive industrial sector, we cannot ignore the possibility of economic disparity being created, leading to social tensions. We as poor and populous countries cannot allow this at any cost. In our far-reaching programme of economic reforms we, in India, have always fashioned the reforms with a human face and ensured large and special doses of investment in the welfare and employment of millions and millions of poor people at the base of the pyramid. These constitute the unique features of our economic reforms and are working very well.

Both our countries have the natural and the human resources to achieve this objective, given some necessary catalytic inputs. I have come to Iran and I come to you with a message for purposive cooperation and confirming our policy of consolidating Indo-Iranian friendship. Barring individual limitations, Indo-Iranian relations can be expanded in a multifaceted framework.

Iran is an Islamic Republic. India is a pluralistic, secular multi-religious, democratic Republic. In the rich multi-religious, multi-ethnic social fabric of the Indian nation, all religions have been woven as warp and woof. They are all respected as equals, while the state itself does not profess any religion. This is the essence of Indian secularism. This we believe, is the only way for the Indian society to exist, namely, as a great mosaic in which all elements coexist. We have one of the largest Muslim populations in the world amongst our citizenry. They are and they will continue to be vital, influential and dynamic factors affecting

all social, political and economic processes in my country. This phenomenon also constitutes a factor of affinity and friendship between our two countries.

I have just mentioned India's pluralistic society. There are some common problems, as well as opportunities, of pluralistic societies the world over. The more complex the pattern of pluralism, the more will be the number of majority-minority configurations. This is natural and the genius of the state and its constitution would be in finding effective ways of harmonising these configurations in the polity. May I, humbly but emphatically, say that the entire history of India is purely and simply—and nothing but—a continuous, courageous, never-yielding, massive national effort at harmonising heterogeneity and achieving unity in diversity. I believe, further, that with modernisation and quick and constant interaction in an increasing number of fields and activities, with the world shrinking into a global village, heterogeneity and plurality in nations is going to show an increasing trend.

What is remarkable is that over the millennia, India has succeeded in this effort perhaps more than, and much longer than, any other pluralistic society anywhere. And the success story continues, here, of course, success does not mean total absence of aberrations, some of them even severe. What I am, with full justification, claiming is the end result—which is evident from the survival of the Indian society and polity through times of great adversity and grave centrifugal strains. The promise of similar survival in future is equally bright.

Speaking of minorities, India has a variety of minorities, such as religious minorities, linguistic minorities, ethnic minority groups etc. In respect of each of these categories, our Constitution and laws provide for special concessions and facilities. This is the way our leaders, over the decades, have strengthened national integration. It is our heritage that we do not consider any section of our population as different from another in terms of rights and responsibilities. Both majority and minority sections of all kinds are integral part of the national mainstream. They have the common identity of Indianness.

We have a tradition of interaction of the mind and intellect in politics and in social affairs for more than two millennia. It is varied and rich encompassing the knowledge and endeavours of our peoples for centuries, in the spheres of astronomy and literature, science and medicine, metaphysics and religion, theology and architecture. Hafiz and Sadi, Malik Mohammad Jaisi and Amir Khusro, Mohammad Al-Razi and Dara Sikoh, all personify this richness as also the potential for a bright future.

I had the privilege of calling on the supreme leader this morning. My discussions with him, with your President Mr Hashmi Rafsanjani and your other leaders have indicated to me a constructive response. It is my expectation that this visit and the discussion held with your leadership will give a tangible impetus to Indo-Iranian relations and Indo-Iranian friendship. In our view, a stable and close relationship between Iran and India will contribute to stability, security and progress in our region.

It is with the affirmation of this faith and hope that I conclude my remarks. I also have the conviction that my friends assembled here, the distinguished Members of the Majlis, will give encouragement and sustenance to the trends of cooperation and friendship characterising our past and present relations and interactions.

India and Netherlands

ALMOST FOUR CENTURIES ago, the great maritime traditions of Holland brought your sailors and navigators to the shores of India. Thus began an interaction that has changed and evolved into a bilateral relationship of political understanding, economic and commercial cooperation, and exchanges in various areas that benefit both our countries. Your visit, Mr Prime Minister and Madame Lubbers, is in keeping with this constructive tradition, and we welcome you warmly as friends and wish you a pleasant stay in our country.

Our bilateral relationship has, I think, an exemplary status in a fast-changing world whose uncertainties can be disconcerting. In the cold war era certain features of inter-state relations had become rigid and predictable: confrontation between members of adversarial blocs, the tendency of nations to take advantage of crisis around the world for ideological advancement, the debilitating conflict between irreconcilable political and economic systems. Today, these rigidities and antagonisms are much less. But the world is perhaps no safer than it was five years ago.

During your visit to our country in 1987 our leader, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, had observed, "In this nuclear age, more than ever before, human survival requires that adversary relationships give way to peaceful coexistence and the pacific settlement of disputes. Peace is the foremost question before humankind." In such a context, a mutually beneficial relationship such as ours, with its foundations of goodwill and understanding has qualities of benevolence and stability that an insecure world seeks.

India-Netherlands equation is exemplary in another sense. Much is said about the North-South gap; here is a North-South bridge that is wellplaced, useful, and sturdy. Our problem-free relationship, in fact, points to the importance of diverse countries, in an interdependent world, coming together to mutual benefit.

Speech at the banquet hosted in honour of the Prime Minister of Netherlands, Mr R.F.M. Lubbers, New Delhi, 27 October 1993

As an economist yourself, Mr Prime Minister, you will appreciate our emphasis on development and growth. India faces gigantic tasks of eradicating poverty that centuries of exploitation and neglect have created; of stimulating the energies of its people towards concerted, constructive activity; and of ensuring economic growth within the parameters of social justice. Our economic reforms aim at precisely this. We wish to take our country from the sluggish growth pattern of the past into a self-generated and self-sustaining economic vitality that addresses the needs of our 850 million people. It is, as I said, an immense exercise, and one in which the support and solidarity of friends like the Netherlands is of special value. I would, in this connection, like to place on record our gratitude and appreciation for the generous help that the Netherlands has been providing us through the years. The consistency and steadiness of such help has enhanced its worth.

An important business delegation accompanies you on your visit. We welcome its members and trust that their stay here will convince them of our determination to stay the course as far as economic liberalisation is concerned. We invite Dutch business leaders to participate in our economic growth by working with their Indian counterparts to encourage bilateral trade, joint ventures and Dutch investment in India.

Mr Prime Minister, it was during your Presidency of the European Community that the historic Maastricht Treaty, charting the course of European integration, was signed. We wish you success in your endeavours to strengthen the bonds of European unity. And we look forward to a cooperative and mutually reinforcing relationship with the integrated Europe, whose strengths can provide a vital input into the global quest for peace, security and development.

In our region of South Asia, we are working to improve and strengthen relations with our neighbours. Much success has been registered and the potential is vast. Our objective is to have a region where the interests of all are addressed and promoted in a cooperative effort, a region where commonalities overcome divergences, bringing

countries and peoples together in goodwill and combined effort. Admittedly, there are problems like state-sponsored cross-border terrorism infiltrating into our territory. But our conviction is that the forces of good-neighbourliness, given the support of our countries, can triumph.

Indo-Singapore Friendship and Cooperation

IT IS A special pleasure, Mr Prime Minister and Madame Goh, to have you as our honoured guests for our Republic Day celebrations this year. Your presence at our festivities symbolises the worth and potential in India-Singapore friendship and cooperation.

Our countries are linked by history, and in the contemporary context by the shared commitment to a region and a world where people come together in harmonious and productive effort. Singapore's economic successes have been landmarks in Asia's growth; and we in India are working to tap the talents and energies of our people to unshackle the nation's potential. Thus, while in the past our two countries shared certain traditions, today we are poised to mould our strengths together to mutual benefit.

Over the last two years, we have embarked on a radical restructuring of our economy. Our policies in earlier years concentrated on building up our economic base virtually from scratch, at the same time addressing the complex and inescapable social needs of our large

population. The time has now come to step out into the larger world, as it were. And we have done so in a well-considered, systematic way, neither fighting shy of certain positive steps in liberalisation nor going overboard with pulling all stops at the risk of widespread human distress. Ours is, in a word, reform with a human face. And our deregulation and liberalisation programme has already started yielding notable results and is also gathering momentum towards an integration of the Indian economy with the global economy. In this effort, we look to Singapore as a vibrant and responsive partner.

The complementarities between our two countries are evident: Singapore's resources of capital technology and expertise can find excellent networking with India's agricultural and mineral wealth, skilled manpower and markets. Our bilateral cooperation can extend to third country projects, indeed, our cooperative effort can be exemplary in the way it exploits and optimises the strengths of each country for the benefit of both. Your visit, Mr Prime Minister, will, I am confident, provide a timely and strong impetus for this.

The past few years have witnessed a regionalisation drive in Singapore. Mr Prime Minister, you are actively encouraging and guiding Singapore companies to seek business opportunities in the region. A number of them are set to establish joint ventures in India, one of which—the Bangalore Information Technology Park—would be inaugurated by your Excellency this Friday. The other major projects on the anvil cover diverse fields ranging from ship-breaking to warehousing and containerisation, to civil construction and trade, reflecting the versatile interests and sectoral diversity of Singapore investors. At the same time, recent liberalisation measures have now made it possible for Indian companies to go to Singapore to do business. We will be organising an “India Trade and Technology Fair-94” to give greater exposure to our products and capabilities. Our hope is that the range of India-Singapore contacts will be consolidated and will, in the months and years to come, register notable growth.

India has cordial relations with all the countries of South-East Asia. And now that we are a sectoral dialogue partner of ASEAN, we

are looking forward to a further expansion and deepening of our relations with the region as a whole. In a changing global economy where unpredictable forces sometimes operate, such constructive stabilising linkages are welcome and we wish to promote them. We look to Singapore, and to our cooperation, as the opening of doors to a vista of regional cooperation that reinforces the economic foundations of each individual nation.

In a world in transition, nations need an anchor. Friendship and cooperation are excellent anchors. The cooperation between India and Singapore now ranges over a wide area from trade to education, from technology to culture. I am confident that your visit to India will infuse even greater momentum into a steadily growing relationship.

Our world in transition is also attempting to define its new contours. India believes that such an exercise—whether in the political and diplomatic fields or in the fields of trade, science and technology, culture or any other—should reflect the aspirations not of a select few but of our global community. International decision making should not maroon sections of humanity in passive, often resentful, acceptance; international interaction should marginalise no nation; and the fruits of growth should not be the bounty of only a few. India's objective has, therefore, consistently been the creation of a world order where nations and peoples work together for the good of all.

It is in this spirit of common effort directed towards common benefit that I once again welcome you to India and wish you a pleasant and useful stay here.

Each Society Has to Find Its Own Middle Way

IT IS, INDEED, a privilege to address this august audience at the closing session of the Davos Symposium. I should like to thank Prof. Schwab and his colleagues for bringing about this interface of political leaders and functionaries of government, with the corporate leadership of the world. The Symposium of the World Economic Forum at Davos has now come to be regarded as one of the global events every year.

I have not heard eternal questions, difficult questions, being so beautifully raised as Prof. Wiesel has just done. I was wondering if the answers will be as beautiful. I wonder if there will be any answers at all which could be called definitive. Yet, it has to fall to the lot of those actually running the governments to find answers, even by blundering into them. I have, therefore, thought about the subject in my own way.

The selection of the theme this year is both timely and thoughtful. In the closing lap of the century, it is but necessary to anticipate the challenges that face mankind as we move towards the next century. With every passing day, the concern becomes more urgent. However, in the continuum of time, the end or the beginning of a century is merely a means of calculation for convenience. Crossing the century could at best be considered a matter of subjective rejoicing to those whose life span happens to be so divided. Therefore, when we talk about the 21st century, we are merely looking into the future, with a foreseeable dateline; that is all.

Historic changes have taken place in the world within the past few years. Some of them have been dramatic in their swiftness—so swift, indeed, that it gives an illusion that the world had never changed before. This, of course, is very far from true and I would therefore, not consider these changes totally unprecedented. In India we have always looked at human progression in cycles of rise and fall, and tend

to take these changes in a steadier stride. However, we live in a world dominated by Western ideas. These ideas may not necessarily have deeper insight in all cases, but many of them have succeeded—by their arms in the past and by their technology in the present. We have to adopt, or adapt to, these technologies as well as all that is wise and humane in the West. Yet, while doing so, we have to be securely anchored in our own tradition, which is equally incisive, and much more relevant to our situation.

The cold war has ended and so has the bipolar superpower configuration. The universal acceptance of democracy as a preferred form of government has had its impact. In shifting decision-making to the people, through their elected representatives, the prospect of the people themselves having the final word in shaping their own destiny in the real sense, is bound to create a new situation in the state structure itself. Thus, we have passed through a full circle in India, starting with Village Republics or Assemblies thousands of years ago and going on to kings, conquests, empires, cultural aggressions, economic exploitations, Parliaments, State Assemblies and back to the emphasis on Village Panchayats where the focus on decision-making is again fast returning. I am inclined to believe that in different forms it must have happened in many other societies.

Along with this change has come the rejection of the paradigm of the command economy based on communism. However, it is not always realised that the command economy itself was meant as a corrective to another system and it is not logical to assert that the rejection of the command economy *ipso facto* means a total acceptance of what it had sought to replace. In India, we recognise the change, but maintain a balance, which has come to be known as the 'Middle Way'. The middle way is not just a philosophical postulate enjoined by the great Buddha; it has permeated India's life in a variety of ways. When communist ideas tended to overpower Indian thinking, Prime Minister Nehru adumbrated the concept of 'Mixed Economy'. He was criticised in every quarter, right and left; but the mixed economy concept has saved India time and again, from political submission and economic dependence.

Today, again, some seem to think that with the collapse of the communist system and the world having become unipolar, there can be no middle way, since the world has only one way now. However, from what has happened, it does not seem to follow that there is only one single way for the development of societies for all time to come. The assertion is unrealistic. The middle way only reminds us that one should not accept a dogma even if it happens to be the only one in the field at a given moment.

Human thought can never be taken as, so imbecile or immutable. Change has to be accepted as a result of deliberate and objective thinking. At the same time, those who wear the shoe and know where it pinches should have full say in deciding how to mend it. In the new-found enthusiasm for change, governments should not go overboard and plunge large chunks of their people into mass misery; they have no right to do that. I am not propounding a theory. I am merely saying that I have no right to throw millions of people out of their jobs overnight, because I want a particular change. If someone asks me to do so, I would say in all humility that either he does not know my country, or does not know what I am really trying to do. We have to find solutions which involve reforms, certainly, but which are also humane. In India we call it reform with a human face. The schemes of change must, therefore, take full note of local contingencies and make allowance for them. I am also clear in my mind that each society has to find its own 'Middle Way' suited to its genius and circumstances; but find it must, eventually and find it in the spirit of the new changes in the world, if it has to succeed. And this should be the approach of countries that accept change. They accept change because they think change is necessary, not because they are helpless, not because there is no other way. This voluntary acceptance of change is the crux of the matter wherever you have reform coming in any sphere of activity in human life. We cannot have any ready-made formula; we cannot have ready-made prescriptions coming from thousands of miles. We have to evolve our own thinking, our own way of mending our shoe.

Almost throughout the world, the preferred model of market forces and primacy of individual initiative has gained acceptance.

Liberalisation in trade, and pursuit of policies, allowing capital, technology and entrepreneurship to move more freely across national boundaries have given a strong impetus to economic growth. New technologies of communication in particular, tend to blur the relevance of national boundaries. They provide a strong stimulus to global integration. The remarkable advances in medicine, in biotechnology, nuclear science and cybernetics, promise to change human life beyond recognition provided, however, the new stimulus does not stop at the point of affordability. This is one of the conundrums of the modern change. How many can afford the changes that are coming? And what happens to those who cannot? Here I find India and a few other developing countries more fortunately placed. We do not find serious difficulty in the flow or absorption of technology, except when our progress itself tends to create some uneasiness in some quarters.

It is perhaps this state of flux that underlines the current debate and behind the effort is to reassess the coming challenges that face mankind in the new situation.

I am aware of the prognosis that the problems of mankind hereafter are going to be only cultural and civilizational. While I am impressed by the corollary of this thesis, namely, that all economic and ideological problems will just disappear, my realistic assessment indicates to me quite clearly that poverty will continue to be the most serious challenge to mankind during the greater part of the 21st century, if not longer. My reasons are simple. Poverty is as much a breeding ground of disunity and tension as any other factor one may cite. Those tensions are bound to dominate to such an extent that the effort to deal with poverty as the first priority will simply not succeed in many cases. In the case of India, recent experience shows that the priority attention did get diluted for some time last year, because of the sudden emergence of a crisis having religious overtones and emotional stresses. But eventually, we were able to bring the focus back on the priority issues with a determined effort mainly because of the political stability we had. Whether this turn around will be possible in all countries and in all cases is highly doubtful. In the result, poverty and the problems arising out of it will just not go away. It is bound to be a long haul everywhere.

Consequently, through the 21st century, there will continue to be vast numbers of people throughout the world who will still be unable to take care of their basic needs. New approaches and new programmes will, therefore, have to be formulated to solve this global problem, taking it as global. I feel that the fall out of mass misery would not affect specific groups, countries or regions only, but would engulf the whole world. With growing integration any thought of insulating any part of the world from the problems of other parts would be futile.

Along with poverty, many countries face widespread illiteracy. In a vast number of cases, though not all, the two seem to go together. Apart from other factors, there is also a correlation between illiteracy and unplanned population growth. A cooperative global effort will be required to fight this combination by harnessing some of the major technological developments, particularly those relating to communications. I am hopeful that a literate world could be ensured within the first quarter of the coming century, even earlier if determined efforts are made.

The question of environment is assuming basic proportions and impinging on the very survival of mankind. Here again, there is a serious dichotomy between man's various approaches to nature and nature's resources legitimately available to him.

To go back a little into recent history, when 'modern' civilization set forth to discover the secrets of nature, its intention was to conquer it. When I say modern, I just put it in quotes because it is only in terms of time that it is modern, not in the matter of content. Modern man was thrilled by his mastery over nature and exploited it excessively and mercilessly. However, nature now threatens to commit suicide unless it obtains redress. We, in India and the East, on the other hand, had always looked upon ourselves as a part of nature and subject to its laws. This is amply clear from our ancient texts, our customs, the way the villagers live, the way India's tribal people live in the forests. They are just part of nature. They are not out to destroy it. They do not over-exploit it. The bulk of our old literature, both oral and written, over thousands of years, clearly brings out this relationship between

man and nature. All this is evidence of our coexistence with nature. We had nothing like the modern challenge of nature's extinction, such as mankind is facing today.

However, the growing consciousness of this challenge creates hope. 'Sustainable development' is no longer a mere slogan of some enthusiastic environmentalists. It has come to be accepted as a major determinant of development policy. It is important that the adversarial attitude towards nature is replaced with a healing relationship between the earth and human civilization. Therein perhaps lies the solution, although it can only be in the long-term. The technologies of the future, the industries of the future, the economic activity of the future, has to take into account this limiting factor of the environment. We simply cannot over-exploit nature, as was done over the last several centuries. This has now given rise to a global controversy between the developed and developing countries. It is, however, a good augury for mankind and the earth that in 1992, we could agree on what is called AGENDA-21 at Rio de Janeiro. I hope, those decisions will be implemented in letter and spirit and that those who agreed then will not begin backtracking.

The major political events in the current decade, especially the disappearance of the bipolar configuration, have created high expectation for a peaceful future. The emergence of two superpowers was followed by the cold war, but it is also a fact that the superpowers did not go to war directly. They managed to keep the cold war cold. But they were certainly active on the chess board of proxies. The cold war exacerbated tensions at several flash points; yet looking back, one could realise today that the cold war tensions, by and large operated at points where the potential for conflicts already existed, in some measure at least. They had been created earlier through imperial strategies and other such causes. In the result, we find that even after the end of the cold war, the flashpoints have not turned peaceful. In fact, the threat to peace has heightened. Thus, the end of the cold war is welcome for a variety of reasons, but it does not, by itself, usher in peace everywhere. It will no doubt prevent a world conflagration; in addition, it can create conditions for the resolution of regional conflicts,

provided it fits into the global strategy of the wielders of real power—one or more, it matters little. The question is : Who will wield that real power?

I have already taken note of the forecast by some thinkers that only cultural and civilizational problems will beset mankind hereafter. If the forecast means that today's economic problems have now become solvable, one could agree to a large extent. I am sure your deliberations have shed some light on this. The problems of, say, hunger, housing, education, health etc. face us in a massive way, they do need an equally massive effort, and they need resources and technology. But all these could be made available and there is no mystery about them and one does not once again have to search for solutions. In that sense, the problems are solvable. But the prospect of their being actually solved is nowhere in sight in the short run. In addition, the ethnic-cultural-religious problems certainly threaten to get aggravated. They have, in fact, got aggravated in the past few years. What seems likely is a further complication wherein economic, social and ethnic-cultural factors combine to compound the threat to the political unity and peace of states. A variety of sub-identities are surfacing, putting the concept of the nation-state to unprecedented stress. The spectre of low-cost proxy wars, trans-border export of terrorism, clandestine encouragement to religious fundamentalism often through money and arms, disruption of public peace to create panic among the people, internationalisation of local issues, recourse to blackmail of various kinds—all this and much more is already in evidence and, indeed, on the increase. Anarchy and total cessation of developmental effort stare many developing countries in the face.

The challenge, therefore, is to see that the most natural and basic aspirations of mankind, for enhanced welfare and well-being, are preserved and encouraged so that the urge for human effort is not destroyed. The task is to create, strengthen and fulfil the desire for, and the stake in, a better life in societies where religious fanaticism and hatred have completely clouded the judgement of the people and blinded them to their own future. It is by no means easy for the people to come out of this false stupor, since they are often left paralysed

between an induced pseudo-religious frenzy and their own suppressed zest for a better life. However, the task is not altogether impossible. This has been demonstrated in the recent elections in some States in India where politically motivated religious fanaticism had held complete sway in the past few years. With diligent and patient work among the people, their desire for socio-economic development has been made to prevail over misused religious slogans and tactics. Much more, of course, needs to be done to consolidate this gain. But what I wish to highlight here is that much of the fundamentalist fanaticism prevailing today may, on a deeper analysis, be found to be traceable to causes very unrelated to religion. To discover and remove those causes will be the real challenge of the leaders of the world, since it may not always be possible to eradicate the malaise by individual efforts in the affected countries separately.

History teaches us that an unfettered mind is the basis of human progress. However, at all times there have been forces and interests that tried to come in the way. We see these forces today as well; they take myriad shapes. I recognise that there are costs inherent in the full exchange of knowledge and ideas. Those who invest in furthering the frontiers of science and technology expect recompense. We do not necessarily argue against that expectation but we believe that when the price is paid, there should be no other extraneous and unreasonable restraints. In case of an unwarranted insistence on such conditionalities, the challenge would be to develop the necessary peaceful technologies at the national level. We must seek to reaffirm, as a matter of high principle, the spirit of inquiry which is central to human progress. This cannot be stopped at any cost. This should not be allowed to be stopped at any cost. We cannot be borrowing or buying the results of this effort from elsewhere for ever, because the tap can be turned off any moment and we will be left with nothing, but an outdated and hidebound society.

It was not my intention nor was it possible for me to be exhaustive in dealing with all the challenges that are likely to face mankind in the 21st century. I have dealt at some length on the challenges we are likely to carry from the past into the 21st century because, in my view, these

are fundamental and continue to be critical for the well-being of mankind as a whole. Realism demands that we recognise our responsibility to take on the new challenges alongwith the old.

In conclusion, I must say that I am greatly encouraged by the fact that solutions to the problems are in the process of being evolved. There is certainly a fresh willingness to come to grips with these issues. I have faith in human ingenuity. I am fully confident that together, mankind will triumph.

Indo-German Economic Relations

IT GIVES ME a great pleasure to be here today and address this important gathering of Indian and German business personalities organised by the Asia-Pacific Association. I value this opportunity to share my perceptions with you.

The profound changes which have taken place in world in recent years—the end of the cold war and réunification of Germany have ushered in a new phase in Indo-German relations. Both sides recognise and value this relationship, which is not only in mutual interest but also has an important contribution to the global peace and security. It is in this context that chancellor Kohl and I have agreed that the leaders of the two countries should maintain a political dialogue on a regular basis in order to sustain and give further impetus to Indo-German partnership in both political and economic fields.

Gathered here are some doyens of Indian industry and business. This visit and this meeting here today, I am sure, will give an

impetus to the forging of a strategic economic partnership between our two countries.

Given Asia's excellent economic performance, the launch of an Asia offensive by German business and industry and setting up an Asia-Pacific Association to oversee this effort is most appropriate. We welcome this initiative and look forward to a closer involvement by German industry in Asia through this important initiative.

India's economic reforms provide an opportunity to German industry to translate this initiative into concrete forms of economic cooperation. I think, I do not have to go into too many details because the businessmen on both sides have been discussing from time to time. They are aware of the opportunities, they are aware of the laws, they are aware of the potential and, therefore, it would not be necessary for me to go into any great details. Suffice it to say that the Indian Government after embarking on this programme of liberalisation two and half years ago, is pressing ahead. This is what I really want to assure you that there is absolutely no hesitation, no second thought, no dilution of any kind in our resolve to press ahead with these reforms. We are just about three weeks from the Budget. So it would not be proper on my part to say anything more than this. But if I could give an indication of whatever risk it involves, I could say that we are proceeding in the direction of enhancing the liberalisation programme, enhancing certain items that one could think of. After all our Finance Ministry have been talking to you and you have been giving your opinion. Therefore, the direction in which we are set to go is very clear and that is all, I think, I should tell you at this moment.

The industrial climate in India is extremely good. We are satisfied with whatever has been achieved by way of foreign investment. Of course we would like to have more, much more because India can take much more. The impact which is to be made in the economic situation in India is still to be felt. So let me frankly tell you that this is only an ongoing process and we would like this process to be intensified as far as possible and as quickly as possible. I think the main purpose of these meetings and maybe of my coming here to say a few

words to you is that, there is no doubt now that our reforms are irreversible. There is absolutely no doubt that the potential which India has, is known to everyone. I have to assure you further that utilising and exploiting this potential for mutual benefit and also as a measure of Indo-German friendship is very significant.

The friendship of these two countries has always been close. You are really being invited to take one more determined step in the same direction. Whenever you meet, then the way will be cleared. As you go ahead you may be encountering small things. I don't really know what they are. I don't have to know. The point is that there is a whole machinery looking to all this. Anything that is so important has to come up to me or to the Chancellor. I hope it will not, my fervent hope is that nothing need come to us; but if it comes to us, maybe on his behalf or my behalf, I can tell you that it will be solved between the two of us. So there is absolutely no difficulty about that.

But we would like to know from you from time to time what you would like us to do because it is not just a matter of one industry being set up there. It is a question of the totality of economic relations and the totality of the economic prospects of the whole world. It is on that part that we would like you to advise us from time to time, so that in taking decisions at the Government level, we have this great perspective, a very wide perspective in our view, and that is what I would really like to have from you, your perspective. This is not just a matter of business between two sets of people. This is a matter of friendship, one very important aspect of friendship between two great countries in the interest of the whole world. I mean the canvas is much wider than just a few items of business or industry.

So this is what I really wanted to place before you, and, I would like to know from you, to be in consultation with you from time to time. You are welcome with your ideas, your suggestions, your particular comments on what needs to be done in India. I welcome all this and perhaps this is what I would like to place before you as a broad framework in which, I think, you should continue this dialogue. The

institutions which were set up, the consulting mechanism that has been set up for this are extremely useful. I am sure they will devise the necessary guidance from time to time.

Indo-German Partnership in Scholastic Studies

I AM PRIVILEGED to be in this city marbled in history and shaped by the ecstasy of achievement and the anguish of war. Its crisp and clear air evokes the history of cultures, especially those which have been enriched, ripened and mellowed by experience, whether of joy or of pain. In these environs, wars have been fought, walls have been raised and walls have been razed, literally and figuratively. The intellectual life of the twin Berlins—East and the West and now of unified Germany, represents the vitality and resilience of Germany as a nation and as a culture. It is a matter of poignant pride to be the first Prime Minister of a free and united India to be in a free and united Berlin. To borrow a phrase from Schiller: “Your charms have reunited what common use has harshly divided; men have again become brothers under your tender wing.”

Humboldt was a visionary who realised that a great revival movement could be initiated from this new Institution. It brought in communion men of letters and wisdom from many parts and established the tradition of science and the arts which would be independent of state patronage, but not of its interest. Its chambers and portals have been brightened by many scholars who have thrown wide open the frontiers of knowledge in the fundamental sciences, the humanities and

the arts. A nobility of Nobel laureates from this Institution has changed man's perception of the universe and enabled him to reassess himself in terms of fresh theories they have propounded.

Albert Einstein brought about a total revolution from Newtonian mechanistic positivistic science to a science with deep and enduring implications, not only at the theoretical level, but at the empirical level of the governance of societies. We pay tribute also to Max Planck, Gustav Hertz, Robert Koch to the philologists and other luminaries of literature, Nobel laureate Theodor Mommsen and to your students who have included Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

We have a saying that the *Rishis* of ancient India were reborn as scholars in Germany. This University offers its own proof. Its founder, an archaeologist, a diplomat, and a politician proficient as much in Greek as in Sanskrit, gave a fresh direction to Sanskrit studies, especially, grammar. I am glad to know that your University has sustained this tradition for over a century and a half. The two full-time chairs recently established on Indian studies are judiciously balanced between the study of ancient India and contemporary Indian languages.

We have a saying that the *Rishis* of India, as I said, they had a full influence when they come to Germany, reborn or reincarnated depending on what we believe, but what really it means, is that the influence and the ethos has travelled all the way to this country and we find this similarity, we find this sympathetic chord in every scholar's mind and that is really what unites the scholastic traditions of India and Germany.

As one interested in these fields and as a former Education Minister, I have been following keenly the work of German indologists in different spheres of Indian studies. It has been very gratifying for me to note that the traditions of indological studies established by Max Mueller have not become stagnant or repetitive. Hundred years ago, interest in India was primarily in its ancient textual traditions. This was understandable. India owes a great debt to those early pioneers for having once again brought to light the seminal texts in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit. Equally important was their interest in the *Dharmasastra* and

the *Arthasastra*. To Kielohorn and Buehler we owe the first elucidation of Indian history and chronology through their definitive work on Indian Paleography, a work that continues to rank as the important standard reference. The interest in inscriptions and epigraphy has continued with the younger scholars also.

Important research at the interpretative level developed further the vigour of German research. Heinrich Zimmer's work on the "Art of Indian Asia, and Myths and Symbols of Indian Civilization and Indian Philosophy" was a landmark which enabled the European and the educated Indian alike to explore the vast expanse of Indian art and philosophy. His perceptions moved from the textual to the visual. He comprehended the 'symbolism' and underlying principles of this art on its own terms. This was a clear departure from the earlier history of textual and archaeological scholarship. After a period of indifference, I am glad to hear that Zimmer's work is, once again, being acknowledged. Dr Goetz spent many years in India, both at Baroda and again as the first Director of the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi; he unfolded the regional schools of painting. Others have followed these leaders—particularly, Stietencron in the study of Indian iconography, and Waldschmidt in his work, *Miniatures of Musical Inspirations*.

It has been invigorating for me to note that the interest in Indian art has been extended to the study of the lesser known schools of paintings, such as, Paithan paintings by Dallapiccola of Heidelberg and the study of contemporary Carnatic music and classical music. The Institute of Ethnomusicology in Berlin has played a very important role in creating bridges of communication between the traditions of music in the East and the West. All this is a rich contribution of indologists in Germany. We appreciate their interest and commitment.

In this city of Berlin, there is also the important museum where great archaeologists, such as Professor Haertel have played a pioneering role in excavations in India. Indeed, those at Sonkh near Mathura conducted two decades ago brought forth archaeological evidence and art objects which led to the modification of many hitherto accepted

notions of this period of Indian history. We remember him with reverence and affection.

Distinguished friends, for me personally, it has been most refreshing to note the multi-disciplinary and the holistic approach, which has been adopted by the South Asian Institute in Heidelberg, which has launched projects which bring together the ancient past and modern India. While Professor Rothermund's own work has been specialisation in modern Indian history, he has directed several multi-disciplinary programmes launched by the institute where German and Indian scholars have taken part. The results of one such project continue to be discussed and debated as a methodological model for the study of Indian culture. The project, "The cult of Jagannath and regional traditions of Orissa" made it clear that the past of India could not be assessed without studying or taking into account modern Indian or contemporary trends, including, the living traditions and the oral traditions.

You all know that India actually has a longer oral tradition than the textual. It has been lost in the last 150 years. No one really cared for it. But I am glad to say after India won freedom, in free India we have gone back to the inexhaustible treasures of oral tradition, we had in the country and we find that they had been preserved earlier from mouth to mouth, from family to family, from person to person, from father to son, generation to generation, before they were totally eclipsed by the indifference of Imperialist Government. Now, we are happy to say that the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, amongst so many other institutions, have taken up the systematisation of the oral tradition in their original form. We don't accept the philosophy of polishing them to make them modern, that is neither here nor there, but we would like these traditions to continue as they had been and this massive effort is going on in the States, at the Centre and by many interested institutions in India. This is one of the areas where India and Germany can do much more work than has been done because after all it has been started only recently and come to full swing only recently.

Another project of the Institute which has brought young Indian and German scholars together relates to the living traditions of *Khandoba*

of Maharashtra. This again is one of the local beliefs. It is a kind of a character which people have conjured up in their own minds. It is a deity, it is part of God, but not so much God, and what the people of that area have created as a legend, as the story around the legend, and what legend is really supposed to be and do, is totally conjured up by the people and in their creation you find this phenomenon. It is not only *Khandoba* in Maharashtra, you have such characters, such creations, creations of the people themselves in almost every part of India and the local lore is so well woven around that character, it becomes a beautiful part of literature by itself and it forms part of the larger Indian culture and the larger Indian thought which creates everything in your own imagination as you really wanted to be and it creates the necessary faith also in the community. It is very difficult to describe how these different processes interact with one another and produce the result which is so satisfying to the people that they just forget themselves, they live in this particular creation of theirs and this, perhaps, adds to the power of the people, the capacity of the people to forget themselves in something higher than themselves. You can go into detail as much as you like, you will find that this is something which needs to be studied in all details. There is so much, that can be blamed about the Indian psyche, the Indian collective psyche, how people forget their selves, and their individual selves merge with something which they have created themselves.

Professor Gunther Southeimer's films, *Vari* and *Khandoba*—I have seen this *Vari* film; again it is something which is created by the people themselves; there is no outside agency to create it for them; they have created it, perhaps the film only recaptures what there is in the minds of the people—manifest the complexity of India where the pastoral, rural and urban are in constant interaction. His untimely death has been a deep loss for all of us. He stimulated many young Indian and German scholars to take up similar multi-disciplinary research where both the textual and the oral traditions, the classical and the lay forms—what are called *Margi* and *Desi* forms—could be studied as a continuum. This latest trend is most welcome because India is a living civilization where the past continues into the present and the present illumines the past. These studies point to the need for breaking the contrived division of the ancient past and the living present.

As another illustration, I can suggest to Prof. Dr Dietmar Rothermund and his friends who have started this very wholesome method of including the modern. Perhaps, they are aware of the enormous amount of literature, modern literature, which has been created since we started having elections in India. No one has taken the trouble to collect it. But from election to election we have this literature, this oral literature being renewed. We have a hand as political parties but we forget about these things; we go to the next elections with new themes and new literature. I am one, who has seen this literature spring up first in 1952, even in earlier decades during the limited elections of that time, and then how it evolved through election after election. This itself is a very very scintillating study where people's expectations have been reflected in it, people's anger has come into it, people's disappointment, disillusionment has come into it and you have the whole history, the democratic history of India in this literature. It would be worthwhile for someone to collect and see how it reflects the moods of the people from time to time.

I have dwelt at some length on the nature of German scholarship of India only to emphasize the fact that we hold your scholarship in great esteem. It has become a part of our own analytical discourse. I had mentioned a little while ago the belief that the *Rishis* of India were incarnated in Germany. We have yet another saying that the German scholars were again reincarnated as Indian scholars in the Pune School of Indology. These are all expressions of affection, expressions of identification. It is not the question of incarnation or no incarnation. It only means the affinity in the scholastic communities in both countries. These include our scholars Prof R. N. Dandekar, Saroja Bhate and many others. The links have been so well established between the German schools of Indian Studies and Indian Studies in India that we no longer talk of this heritage being the preserve of any single nationality. Schools of German Studies in India are younger in comparison but here also there is a strong and vibrant tradition.

Through this active dialogue in the intellectual fields, we have realised that the fundamental principle governing the Indian world was an integral vision where primacy was given to interrelationship and

interdependence. The study of India cannot be a crystal ball gazing into a glorified past. It must be a yardstick, a touchstone for shaping the present and directing the future. Overspecialisation or narrow-specialisation, fragmentation, insularity of disciplines has in the past only brought about conflict. Walls of ideology have made many intellectual endeavours counter-productive. We have arrived at a time when truly, the walls of biases, of prejudice, of small identities, have to be broken, to create a new humanism based on the absolute trust and respect for the other.

Madam President, writing thirty-five years ago, one of the greatest sons of this city had said, I mean Mr Willy Brandt, and I quote: "In one generation we have experienced greater changes than in centuries before. If someone had told us at the end of 1939 what radical changes the next two decades should bring, most of us would have taken him for mad; the progress of science and technology with their limitless possibilities for good and bad—the new weapons and strategic changes, including the exploration of the universe—the change in the political map due to the coming of age of the Afro-Asiatic world—Russia's rise to the status of a world power and of course what has happened recently—the stirring of India—the challenge of China—the temporary decline of Europe, its division, its revival." All these things have happened in such quick successions, as Willy Brandt says, and we really find it a breathtaking chain of events, we are not able to address fully with either the speed or the content.

"How often and how quickly the impressions of nations and of their representatives have changed! In the course of a few years the Germans have become the model pupils of democratic cooperation. Seen from Moscow, Tito was one day a fascist reptile, the next day a dear comrade. In the eyes of Washington, Nehru—the statesman who impressed me most on my world tour—advanced from a half-communist to a respected partner of the democratic nations." This is what he says, and very very truly.

"World history will not stop in 1960. In the next few years we will experience further radical changes. But although—or better

because—the general confusion is so great and our time full of contradictions, the man who is active in politics must ask himself continually the question: Where do I stand? Where am I going?”

Thirty-five years later, after Willy Brandt wrote this, questions endure, their answers remain elusive. From the 1940's our two peoples have recognised—that man's capability for injustice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary. Upon that basic and essential premise rests the burden, or responsibility, of political leadership today—that of change with stability. This task becomes particularly onerous in a developing country where the essentially political institution of leadership—at the national or at the state and provincial level—is called upon to address specific socio-economic tasks which affect the structure, and even survival, of the existing order.

Leadership must often deal with the very weapon with which it wounds and even, conversely, be wounded by the instrument, with which it seeks to heal. A political leadership overtly representative, or reflective, of an elite, which is unwilling or incapable of introducing radical changes, alienates itself from the mass base of its constituents even as its existence can be imperilled by being overawed by social responsibilities which threaten it with a crisis of credibility.

I bring in this reference today, because of my conviction that the enduring motif of the Indo-German partnership is not merely the vigour of the excitement of intellectual discovery, or the gentle and painstaking efforts of cultural learning not yet the steel and furnace of a vital, live contemporary economic relationship. It is all these things and more—an assimilation that enhances, and does not abridge, a cooperation that allows each to preserve and build upon its identity in communion with the other. “Don't say ‘either, or’ say ‘as well as’,” August Strindberg had written, and nowhere is this maxim truer than in the delicate world of social and political balance where deliberate exclusion alienates and eventually, destroys—and nowhere, to my mind, is this exemplified with greater splendour and truth than in this city of Berlin.

Madam President, the synthesis—once described by Willy Brandt, of an idealistic striving tempered by practical thinking—is indeed, what informed the earliest innovators of an Indo-German partnership, the synergy to which we are heirs. Max Mueller had, in the introduction to his, *Translation of the Vedic Hymns* quoted those who had said to him that the endeavour upon which he had embarked was a task for the next century. He wrote: “No one feels this more strongly than I do; no one has been more unwilling to make even a beginning in this arduous undertaking. Yet a beginning has to be made. We have to advance step by step, nay, inch by inch, if we ever hope to make a breach in that apparently impregnable fortress. If by translation we mean a complete, satisfactory, and final translation of the whole of the *Rig-Veda*, not only shall we have to wait till the next century for such a work, but I doubt whether we shall ever obtain it. My principle, therefore, has always been, let us translate what we can, and thus reduce the untranslatable portion to narrower and narrower limits.” It is a classic concept which needs to be understood and imbibed by all the scholars at all times.

In that endeavour, the restriction of the untranslatable with limits defined more and more sharply, the statesman—or the politician—has no less difficult a task than a writer or a scholar. In all that he does, his efforts must be to make the impossible, possible or at least try to do so and to persuade his people, his adversaries and his friends, and, above all, himself, that the impossible will so remain but need not affect, abridge or inhibit the immense possibilities that yearn to be realised. This is to go beyond Bismarck's definition of politics as the art of possible; to go beyond Beethoven's epitaph to P. Major String Quartet—“Must it be? It must be.” It is to go beyond these to a recognition of what is not possible now, but never to rule out the unimaginable possibilities of possibility itself. Then one must build upon the possible, reducing its gap with what is necessary, with resolve undiminished by distraction and strength not enfeebled by diversions.

To two nations who have been on their current paths for so brief a space of time, the partnership between them offers a striking example of that awareness. Our cultural strings have been those of admiration

and attraction, and it is precisely in that drawing to each other that I see the varied, immense and diverse future that our association holds in fields as fresh and enduring as the linden trees that line the walks of this great city. For India, that partnership and association will continue to be a vital factor not only in our international relationship, but also in our national mission and endeavour. We are currently passing through the most important transition in our economy. We are reorienting the policies of the last forty-five years and trying to accomplish a market-led domestic economy and a liberal trading regime to overcome a macro-economic crisis, while also trying to ensure that the base of the Indian social pyramid does not remain isolated and deprived of this great transformation. We are also striving to ensure that the Indianness of our people, of their moorings and their pride in their timeless identity, is in no way diminished.

India, like the city of Berlin and the German nation-state, is renowned as a cultural centre from where “liberal energies and great accomplishments” sprang. The harmonising of our energies today to collective accomplishment will prove us at least worthy of the heritage to which we are heir, a heritage of which this great Institution has been a witness and a participant.

Respect for Human Dignity

SPEAKING MORE THAN a decade ago on the making of a nation, Smt Indira Gandhi spoke of the founding fathers who could summon people to a heroic effort by inspiring them with the vision of truth and glory. We have the privilege of having in our midst today one of the founding fathers, not just of a nation but of a democratic revolution which was part of profound and momentous changes in an important part of the

Speech on the occasion of the presentation of Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 1993, New Delhi, 8 February 1994

world. The President of the Czech Republic, Mr Vaclav Havel, has been the inspiration for societal transformation on a scale which determines history.

The four decades after the Second World War were a tense period in international relations. Europe was divided into military blocs. This division was global in its consequences. Supporting alliances and pacts sprung up virtually in every corner of the world. An entire generation lived its life under the shadow of war. As stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction proliferated at an ever increasing pace, it is no exaggeration to say that the future of humanity hung on a thread.

The world, divided and confused, stood on the edge of an abyss in a frightening confrontation of nerves. This precipice known as the cold war, offered a dead stand off. Smt Indira Gandhi described it very aptly: "Peace is not that which teeters on the brink. That is the absence of war, yet it threatens war. Nor can peace be based on outmoded concepts of imperialism, military alliances, spheres of influence or balance of power and competition in nuclear and conventional terror."

The pressures of competing blocs were not only on each other but had their serious internal repercussions as well. In the name of security and for reasons of state the most basic freedoms were denied to many peoples the world over. Resources were diverted from the path of development to the cause of destruction. Priorities were fundamentally skewed. A world struggling for the most fundamental rights to livelihood, to education, to social security—was instead asked to subsist on dogmas and doctrines.

One direct fall out of the cold war on societies, most closely affected was in the suppression of the desires of peoples to fashion their societies according to their own ideas, traditions and history. Intellectuals were at the forefront of such a desire in Europe and it was inevitable that they would bear the brunt of the effort to crush the spirit of the people seeking democratic rights.

Indira Gandhi was fond of quoting our great poet of the national movement, Sarojini Naidu, who said, "True peace is not the peace of

negation, not the peace of surrender, not the peace of the coward, not the peace of the dying, not the peace of the dead but the peace of militant, dynamic, creative of the human spirit which exalts.” What we have witnessed these last few years in Eastern Europe was the achievement of the strength of that human spirit, an outstanding example of which is the recipient of the 1993 Indira Gandhi Prize, our honoured guest this afternoon.

All of us are shaped by our times. Difficult times produce exceptional people. Exceptional in the sense of having a vision, a vision based on values, and a determination not to compromise on those values at any cost. President Havel is an unique example even by the exceptional standard of an extraordinary era. He had the vision of a just society and the courage to articulate that vision against all odds. He transcended that spirit of apathy and powerlessness, which keeps a society in check.

He recognised the malaise because he had faith not only in himself and his people but in humanity as a whole. In his own words “The most important thing of all is not to lose hope and faith in life itself. Anyone who does so is lost, regardless of what good fortune may befall him...only those who have not lost faith and hope can see the horrors of the world with genuine clarity.”

President Havel is most widely known for his involvement with the Charter-77 Human Rights Movement. The Charter is a historical document seeking as it does to address some of the more fundamental issues of modern society. It poses questions which have been at the heart of endless debates on political philosophy—on the relationship between man and state.

Its approach is rooted in the long tradition of liberalism and humanism on the rights and duties of both citizens and governments. The message of the Charter is as valid today as it was then—that the guarantee of human rights is both the right of the citizens and the duty of the state. The Charter speaks of the need to combat freedom from fear and reminds us even today, that each one of us has, his or her share

of responsibility for the state and society. This feeling of co-responsibility is fundamental to the existence of a civil society. Charter 77 described itself as motivated by a common concern for the faith of the ideals to which people were attached. It was a matter of rejoining for all of us who believed in values of democracy and pluralism when a decade later, these ideals flowered in their triumph.

We in India should ponder over the message of President Havel and that generation of intellectuals who became the conscience of their nations. Their message was of respect for human dignity and liberties. But equally important, this faith in the principles of non-violence was more than amply demonstrated by their actions. I stress this point because there are many, today who speak of human rights and yet they have no hesitation in taking recourse to violence.

In doing so, they violate the most fundamental human right, the right to live. India is a country which has an exemplary record in the observance of human rights, the result of a long history of tolerance and open mindedness. It is a matter of regret that this facet of the character of our nation should be taken advantage of by those who have demonstrated by their actions that they have no real belief in either human rights or in human dignity.

We honour President Havel today with the Indira Gandhi Prize for his steadfast commitment to the principles of non-violence, and for his extraordinary struggle in the cause of human rights and dignity. We, in India when absorbing his message, which reflects the best traditions of our national movement, should think of his words, “the singular, explosive, incalculable political power of living within the truth resides in the fact that living openly within the truth has an ally, invisible to be sure, but omnipresent.”

Perspectives on Indo-British Relations

IT IS A pleasure for me to meet all of you. Meeting scholars and specialists from outside India, who have made India their subject of study or work can yield several new perceptions which may not be available to me from within the country. They do not serve as a substitute for national perceptions, but together with the latter, they make a richer whole. Meeting Indian scholars in this country and in a Centre named after Nehru is, therefore, a real and special pleasure for me.

The relations between India and Britain sometimes defy definition. When I was at school (in a small town in what is now Andhra Pradesh) the name or word 'Britain' was like a coin of which the obverse meant sovereignty, while the converse meant grinding poverty and servitude. Later, during the Quit India Movement and the Great Bengal Famine of 1943, the chasm seemed very wide. And when India's leaders were in the Raj's prisons, the rift seemed, indeed, unbridgeable. But there were several alleviating interactions as well. The poets, Rabindranath Tagore and Mohammad Iqbal, the scientists, C.V. Raman and Jagadish Chandra Bose, the techno-industrial pioneers, Jamshetji Tata and M. Visvesvaraya, the philosopher, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, had all been honoured and made knights of the British Empire. On the Indian side, C.F. Andrews had been, by popular acclaim, given the name 'Dinabandhu', even as Madeleine Slade became Mirabehn.

Thus there is a historical bond between our two countries that makes our relationship unique. We have each left an indelible imprint on the institutions, economy, culture, and indeed, psychology of the other. When we became free more than 45 years ago, we underwent a process of adjustment to the world as it then existed. Our freedom required an adjustment to a new role for Britain also. For us, there were questions of identity, a certain prickly assertion of autonomy and

of reviving the impulses of growth after a dependent existence in which these had been suppressed. For Britain, the loss of an empire after a prolonged war evidently brought a different set of problems of adjustment.

There was willingness on both sides to make these adjustments and save the relationship. Three Indians, for instance, each of whom had a deep understanding of Britain—Naoroji, Gandhiji and Nehru—showed us how British rule could be resisted but British goodwill retained. By titling his book, *Poverty and un-British Rule in India*, Naoroji made the point that Britain's rule in India had un-British and, therefore, ignoble characteristics to it. Setting that situation right, he argued, would not only be correct; it would be British. Gandhiji went even further. He spoke of the distinction between 'the Empire-builder Englishmen of the old type; and the new type that is now coming into being, burning to make reparation for what his forefathers did.'

Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji's most charismatic lieutenant had written, likewise, of 'two Englands'. He pointed out in his *Discovery of India*, that the time when Queen Elizabeth gave her Charter to the East India Company in 1600, was the time Shakespeare was alive and writing and when Milton was born. Nehru went on to ask in that book, which England it was that came to India. Was it, he wrote, "the England of Shakespeare and Milton, of noble speech and writing and brave deed, of political revolution and the struggle for freedom, of science and technical progress, or the England of the savage penal code and brutal behaviour, of entrenched feudalism and reaction?"

Perhaps both Englands came to India but the England that left India's shores was the England that neither you nor I would have wished to see remain. What did remain in terms of memories, traditions, institutions and abiding influences was the England represented by outstanding Britons—by Lord Curzon, who did so much for India's monuments; Lord Ripon for the institutions of self-government; Lord Hardinge for his services to the dignity of the Indian diaspora; Sir Maurice Gwyer who initiated the idea of a teaching university campus in Delhi; Sir Stafford Cripps and Lord Pethick-Lawrence, who under-

stood Indian aspirations with a rare sensitivity; Sir Mortimer Wheeler, whose excavations led to India's rediscovery of her past and her buried civilization. And the England represented by innumerable civil servants who came to love and respect the districts they served in, often writing masterly *gazetteers* about them.

With each advance in the constitutional parleys between the Indian National Congress and Britain, it became clear to us that the Parliament, an independent Judiciary, an impartial civil service, a free Press and the English language would be Britain's everlasting contributions to modern India. It was of course also clear that in order to use those great instruments, British rule must end. Concurrently, due to many reasons not excluding the situation brought about by World War II, Britain had come to the same realisation. And so in 1947, when the Indian Tricolour replaced the Union Jack, no racist sentiment marred the Indo-British nature of that moment. K.M. Munshi, one of the authors of India's new Constitution; put it very well: "No power in history", he said, "but Great Britain would have conceded independence with such grace and no nation other than India would have so gracefully acknowledged the debt."

A new partnership awaited and beckoned to both nations. It was this that encouraged Jawaharlal Nehru as India's first Prime Minister to decide in consultation with—V.K. Krishna Menon, India's first High Commissioner for Britain, that India should remain within the Commonwealth. Sir Stafford Cripps, commenting on the decision, said to Nehru, "I do believe that you have done something very high in world history. It is good that we have been given this chance to work together, not always seeing eye to eye but always working heart to heart." Many of you present here have known and studied India deeply and with empathy.

It will soon be 50 years since India became free. You are aware of the bewildering complexities that face an ancient civilization which is now a modern nation-state. When a country occupies a chunk of the earth's surface as vast as India does, when it holds the second largest population of the world and when that population is multi-religious,

multilingual and is also multiplying, the problems cannot but be daunting. And so they have been, I assure you.

Each passing day means so many more mouths to be fed, hands to be employed, minds to be educated, bodies to be clothed, housed and given health care. In hard terms this means that we will have to meet the challenge of an alert and skilled population, which inches towards the 1 billion mark. Programmes will, therefore, have to be so devised as to afford palpable satisfaction to the millions. It is well-known that such satisfaction can only come if the people concerned feel that they are participants all along the line—from formulation, through implementation, to fruition. This is where the institution of Parliament and the parliamentary form of democracy have played a unique role—now vigorously supported by our Village Panchayats.

There can never be a restful moment for us in India; we are condemned and privileged to do our utmost perpetually. There will be many voices, many views and many viewpoints. So whatever you say about India—be it in thought, custom, belief or action—it finds its opposite with equal force in another section of India. But there is one thing that can be said about India with finality now and that is that India is changing; changing faster than ever before. Even more important, India is changing according to her own likes. Even as we won our freedom through our own novel method of non-violent resistance, we are changing in the various departments of our life on our own terms. These terms are our own but they are not exclusivist; they are eclectic. It is, after all, on Indian soil that Gautama the Buddha had spoken of the 'Middle Path'. And it was in India that Gandhiji sought to balance rights and duties and showed the equal importance of means and ends.

Within the last decade the world has undergone climatic changes which, again, have required another adjustment in a big way. I am not one of those, who believe that the scale of what is happening now is necessarily unprecedented. Other changes must have appeared equally unprecedented at the time they came about. Nevertheless, what is unprecedented about the present changes is that these have not been the consequences of a war. In a period which was relatively as

peaceful as any in recent times, an existing order suddenly collapsed. At least the suddenness of the collapse was unexpected. About the collapse itself, there had, indeed, been some straws in the winds.

We, in India, are also in the process of this readjustment. The task is somewhat easier for us because we have always been a liberal democratic society with a 'Mixed Economy'. The mix may have to change from time to time, but we never needed convincing that a mix was needed. And so was change. Indian philosophy has always taken change to be basic to the universe. The only point of discussion has been whether there is a reality that changes or whether change is the only reality. For us, time was not the measure of change, change itself denoted time, with no two moments being the same. We never had the problem in conceiving the eternal, as without beginning and end. We did not assume the phenomenon of time stopping, either at the 'Big Bang' or at the 'Second Coming'. What I would like to emphasize is that India is going through another massive change, an extensive change this time. We, of this generation, are fortunate to be the humble midwives of the emergence of change at this juncture. In the process of this change and adjustment that we have undertaken, we recognise and incorporate the following three postulates as essential ingredients:

- (i) that the economies of all nations need to be globalised;
- (ii) that the market is the best available instrument for achieving the most efficient allocation of resources and that market forces should be relied upon to impart dynamism to the economy; and
- (iii) that the role of the state needs to be reconsidered.

However, having accepted these postulates, we have to annotate each of them in our own context. First, there is no country in the world which has not placed some restriction on the globalisation of its economy in pursuit of what it considers its national interest. There is hardly any one who will not concede that there are some social and even economic purposes that would not be served only by market forces. From these it would follow that, whatever the new role of the

state, it would still be important enough to influence a nation's life, including social and economic.

Every society has to determine its own set of ends and means. Today, the issue of the means has been settled in favour of market forces and free trade. But the issues regarding the ends, in other words the determination of the core content of development, remain. This content seems to vary widely between the developed and developing countries today. (Fukuyama) The developing countries have, therefore, to reconsider what the goal of development should be for them. In a sense, this is something which humanity as a whole may have to consider. Gandhiji felt that development contains, or ought to contain, a definite component of basic values that are extremely important in life. He said: "The incessant search for material comforts and their multiplication is such an evil, and I make bold to say that the Europeans themselves will have to remodel their outlook, if they are becoming slaves. It maybe that my reading is wrong, but I know that for India to run after the Golden Fleece is to court certain death." (*Young India*, 30.4.1931)

These words are not merely for quotation. First, they emanate from the Indian tradition. Second, several generations, including mine certainly, were deeply influenced by these ideas. Third, we are quite conscious of the fact that no matter how fast we run after the Golden Fleece, we will not catch it in the sense that India cannot become Britain.

In our conditions, therefore, we have to find an equilibrium to be achieved among three factors, viz. i) that level of material benefit for a human being which is necessary for him to achieve his full creative potential; ii) the level of exploitation of nature that would be consistent with the needs of nature to replenish itself; and iii) the need to ensure a comparable benefit to the vast masses of people in countries where there are no welfare doles possible. To achieve and maintain such an equilibrium should not be considered stagnation. This level will depend upon and be predetermined by the technology available at any point of time. To maintain economic activity at such a level, till technological

progress raises the level itself, should not be considered a curtailment of the free play of market forces. This should be our considered approach—the approach, if I may say so, of variable constant.

Such a way is not a mechanical compromise between other ways. Its characteristics are its own. It accepts the realities of the present day world. It accepts the values of liberal democracy and the limits on the nation-state, which globalisation of trade might require. It accepts the necessity and the efficiency of the market, if not always its virtues. But it finds its appropriate way by determining the ends of economic development that a country should and can pursue. It involves defining, to the extent possible, what the word ‘good’ means, when we are seeking to achieve the greatest good of the greatest number. Consumer satisfaction, which is the main driving force of the economy, undoubtedly, gives pleasure. Pleasure is an essential ingredient of ‘good’ but it is a moot question, whether pleasure and ‘good’ are identical. There must surely be a social, psychological and, perhaps, spiritual content to ‘good’ which is not purely market determined. I believe, there is.

The problem of unemployment in developing countries is qualitatively and quantitatively different from the one in the developed countries. It is not a marginal or fractional phenomenon. There is a low level equilibrium in these societies, perhaps a result of their social milieus as well as economic helplessness. Even countries with sizeable natural resources do not make any appreciable effort to take the possible advantage of that potential. Indeed some countries did, until recently, opt deliberately to continue with such low level equilibrium as their way of life. They preferred the equilibrium and did not mind the low level. This, of course, was an extreme view, bordering on the primitive, which naturally did not last in a world where total isolation is impossible. But the example of these societies points to the need to raise the level of the social pyramid as a whole, without tampering with the equilibrium. That is the kind of development which all developing countries would need and should aim at. For this, new avenues of employment have to provide the thrust. In the developed countries, the income of the unemployed is protected to a not inadequate degree,

through social welfare; yet, social problems still constantly arise. This has forced on us a realisation of the role of work in the human psyche. Benjamin Franklin defined man as a tool-making animal. Marx pointed out that man, while acting on the external world through his labour, not only changes it, but, at the same time, he changes his own nature. The basic role of 'Action' in the human psyche is stated in the Indian tradition when Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita* that, "there is nothing for the Supreme Being to attain, still I engage in action." (3:22) Neither enforced unemployment nor compensated unemployment can, therefore, be a substitute for employment. This cannot be merely an economic phenomenon. It has a social and psychological impact, besides being a corollary of the dynamics of 'Creation'. It becomes a symbol of rejection, of being unwanted in society.

India's plural character, its rich cultural and civilizational mosaic are our greatest asset. But as Jawaharlal Nehru said, it also becomes a burden sometimes. A challenge is thus posed to its inheritors to develop shoulders strong enough to carry the burden—carry it and move forward fast enough not to be left behind those who have much less to carry and could accelerate much more easily and freely. As you are all aware, in this closing decade of the 20th century, this heritage of ours has been under threat. Induced pseudo-religious frenzy has been employed by fundamentalist fanaticism to entrench itself. But the decades-old social education conducted by Gandhiji and Nehru (which itself was built upon the tradition of mutual tolerance among our people) has denied any major success to these forces. The desire for tranquillity and for socio-economic development among our people has prevailed over false religious slogans and tactics. I am aware that much more needs to be done to consolidate this position. I am also aware that, in the final analysis, what needs to be done is to tackle the causes of social unrest, most of which are quite unrelated to religion. The challenge before us now is to see that the basic aspirations of our people for enhanced welfare and well-being, are fostered and served. We want rapid industrialisation, full employment, meaningful induction of science and technology to subserve our social goals, and a general raising of living standards, in which I insist on including the imbibing of the country's immanent value system and cultural moors. The eco-

conomic reforms we have undertaken are tailored to these objectives and are irreversible.

Many other problems face us and will face us in future. the spectre of low-cost proxy wars, trans-border export of terrorism, open and clandestine encouragement to religious fundamentalism often through money and arms—all this and much more is already in evidence and is, in fact, on the increase. But as Iqbal has said, there is something (*kuchh baat*) about India that helps her survive the ravages of time. As India turns her ancient eyes on a new year, a new century, a new millennium, she does so with respect in the past, the future, as a friend of all other countries, societies, as a believer in the whole world as one family, with an earnest aspiration to wipe every tear from every eye, as the Mahatma wanted.

Strengthening South-South Economic Cooperation

I HAVE PLEASURE in welcoming our distinguished guests, the Heads of states and Governments and their delegations to New Delhi on the occasion of the fourth Summit of the Group of Fifteen for South-South Consultation and Cooperation. Though your visit this time may be short, I hope you will be comfortable and have an opportunity to see something of this historic city.

This Summit provides an opportunity to see how best the creative energy of our Group can be released to serve our common objectives of peace and development through cooperation and engagement in a rapidly changing world.

We are a young Group but our concerns are age-old. We are compact but our vision extends across continents. To realise our

unique potential as a Group we must emphasize our trans-regional personality. Our activities must draw sustenance from, and in equal measure, contribute to, our cohesion as a Group. They should be comprehensive and imaginative enough to lead to the willing and positive participation of countries from different continents, such as we are, geographically distant, yet compact in cooperation and close in purpose.

These are not easy tasks when urgent and varied domestic and regional developments demand our attention. However, equally compelling is the longer-term imperative of steering our countries towards a balance and synergy of national, regional and global interests. I am convinced that this is extremely important. At this G-15 Summit, we hope to demonstrate that our absorption in the tasks of today will not come in the way of our seriously addressing the emerging and transcendent issues of tomorrow.

The pace of change in the last few years has been rapid. The end of the cold war, the intensified globalisation of national economies and the technological revolution are just a few elements of this change. Yet the transcendent issues to which I referred, are still with us. We saw the promise of peace, but it has been far from realised. Forces of conflict manifest themselves primarily as attempts to undermine the nation-state system on which the international order rests. They have assumed dangerous proportions and diverse forms—terrorism, separatism and fundamentalism. I believe we in the G-15 have the capacity and the conviction to mobilise world opinion against such destructive forces, as we represent the quest for peace, security and stability. We are fully convinced of the need to introduce reforms in the UN system and expansion of the Security Council so as to give representation to the developing world in the Council's permanent membership. These issues are engaging our attention constantly on the relevant forum.

The importance of strengthening economic and development cooperation in our interdependent world is recognised around the globe. Such cooperation alone can deal with the problems of systemic inequalities, macro-economic imbalances, ecological sustainability,

stagnation and widespread poverty. Protectionist barriers against developing country's exports and discriminatory and restrictive regimes governing the flow of technology must be lowered. There should be adequate appreciation of our capacity and potential to not only develop rapidly but in the process to act as effective catalysts for the regeneration of the world economy. We shall exemplify the intrinsic symbiosis between the interests of the industrialised countries and ours.

Our determination to build our intrinsic capacities to expand cooperation amongst ourselves is firm. The strenuous efforts of developing countries, not least those of the members of this Group to transform and liberalise our economies and to integrate them with the global economy are aimed at charting a new trajectory of growth. This factor, as well as the substantial progress achieved by some of us have created the basis for meaningful and functional networks of relationship, commercial and technological, between and among ourselves, and with the rest of the world.

Cooperation between developing countries on a regional and trans-regional basis has assumed an urgent dimension for us to extend the frontiers of growth. As we grow in collective strength, so too will our individual and conjoined capacities for development, to enable us to contribute to the establishment of a more equitable, balanced and prosperous world order. Our attempts to intensify our interaction with regional free trade and economic cooperation arrangements would affirm the value of 'open regionalism' and of becoming viable growth centres for the free flow of trade, investment and technology across national and regional borders.

Cooperation in the G-15 is tethered to concrete programmes and projects. Over these four years, the projects we have undertaken are in various stages of implementation. We have already made some progress in establishing data bases and information networks on complementarities and opportunities for mutually beneficial trade, investment and technology. Some of our projects operate within the matrices of critical need, natural advantage and environmental

sustainability. Some other projects seek to establish and strengthen the much-needed infrastructural links among our countries and yet others are intended to stimulate intra-industry trade and cooperation in key sectors such as petrochemicals. The G-15 Business Forum which meets regularly along with the Summit is another concrete expression of cooperation, where political purpose is translated into practical business opportunities.

We are conscious of the constraints—infrastructural and attitudinal, that have so far circumscribed the fully potential of intra G-15 trade and economic cooperation. This must change. We also admit that our cooperative projects need to be better targeted and more effectively implemented if they are to make an impact. The programme itself being a pioneering task, such initial shortcomings are to be expected, yet a good beginning has been made and it is my earnest wish that this Summit comes up with new ideas on removing impairments.

I have continued the practice initiated by President Diouf of Senegal, and communicated our views to the Chairman of the G-7 in July 1993. I am heartened by the response. I am convinced the time is right for carrying such constructive consultations further.

The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations have concluded. We hope that it will, as promised, bring about further liberalisation and expansion of the world trade to the benefit of all countries, especially the less developed trading partners. We also expect that the norms and institutions that we have established in the context of the World Trade Organisation will, in their actual operation, uphold the rule of law in the realm of international trade, and that the rights and interests of weaker trading partners will be protected. We must also take care to ensure that the barriers to trade that the Uruguay Round is to lower, are not replaced by new barriers against developing country's exports in the guise of the non-economic concerns. We already have reason to be concerned about attempts to undermine multilateralism and agreed frameworks for the liberalisation of trade. These manifest themselves in the resort to unilateral actions, demands for concessions beyond those agreed to in the Round, and attempts to introduce new protectionist agenda.

All of our countries recognise the importance of increased investment in our productive and technological capacities for accelerated growth and development. At the same time, official development assistance retains its importance. Concessional funding from multilateral financial institutions, particularly in the context of low income countries, which are striving to build basic social infrastructure and alleviate poverty, is an imperative. The burden of external debt is a key resource constraint for indebted developing countries. The forging of innovative growth oriented solutions, as well as non-discriminatory trade and financial policies are needed to contribute to increasing the earnings of developing countries.

Our commitment to environmental sustainability is total and through appropriate policies and measures we will strive to implement our commitments under Agenda 21. On this matter of global concern, nay even human survival, we in turn expect our partners in industrialised countries to give effect to their commitment to make available new and additional resources as well as environmentally sound technologies on favourable and preferential terms.

We are like the pilgrims that our poet philosopher Rabindranath Tagore described in the following terms:

“Yet they are coming, the pilgrims, one and all coming to their true inheritance of the world, they are ever broadening their consciousness, ever seeking a higher and higher unity, ever approaching nearer to the one central truth which is all comprehensive.”

The fact that we have gathered here from three continents of the earth marks a realisation of our true inheritance of this earth. Our actions in the coming years, must confirm that our group is larger than the sum of its parts and that it is worthy of this inheritance.

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WE MEET NOW in the concluding session of the fourth Summit of the G-15 in New Delhi. We have had fruitful discussions on matters relating to the future organisation of the work and activities of the Group as well as on further evolving its perspectives on global issues of common concern.

When we began the Summit, we were set to impart a new dynamism to this Group and enable it to more meaningfully serve the interests of its constituents. We sought to clearly establish a direct correlation between our interest in the Group and the benefits that we can derive from it. We believe that we have been able to provide the wherewithal and direction to the Group in terms of institutional framework and Agenda that, give rigorous monitoring and follow-up, could achieve this objective.

We have decided to broaden the scope of intra-G-15 economic cooperation through the establishment of a Committee on Trade, Investment and Technology which will work towards evolution of trans-regional arrangements. Key elements of these arrangements would be liberalisation, facilitation and promotion of trade to demonstrably increase economic interaction with the Group. The success of our efforts would, in turn stimulate such exchanges in the vital areas of trade, investment and transfer of technology with and among other developing countries. The private sector will have a crucial role to play and will, therefore, be closely associated with this venture. This Committee will also establish interactive links with related projects such as the South Investment Trade and Technology Data Exchange Centre (SITTDEC), payments arrangements, infrastructure, sectoral, and techno-economic projects, such as solar energy and gene banks. This approach will not only bring our complementarities to the fore but will fully utilise them to enlarge markets and accelerate growth and development in our countries. Above all, this approach provides an altogether new dimension to our firm commitment to further implement our cooperative projects and establish more vigorous linkages between them and our national institutions and policies. This would then make South-South cooperation a truly vibrant component of G-15.

The Business Forum, which has been held in tandem with the Summit, has provided new insights to expanding trade, investment through joint ventures, technological exchanges and tourism. It drew up time-bound action plans for strengthening transport, financial and information infrastructure for intra-G-15 trade. The Trade committee could help achieve these objectives through its own work programme.

We recognised that the availability of objective, balanced, extensive and timely information about political, cultural, economic and social developments in G-15 countries is an essential prerequisite of effective cooperation. We, therefore, agreed that G-15 should harness the information and communication revolution to promote better understanding and knowledge about the problems and experiences, capabilities and potential of our countries. This would best be achieved by establishing telecommunications and media link-ups and coordination of efforts in these areas. A group to evolve appropriate strategies in this regard including recommendations on information infrastructure and communications systems, existing and new, that may need to be established will be set up. We are asking the Troika Foreign Ministers to facilitate the setting up of such a group and develop its terms of reference.

The Summit reaffirmed support for the continuing operation of SITTDEC and agreed that member countries should meet their financial obligations. To ensure viability, the Summit recommended that SITTDEC should be commercially-oriented and accept subscribers directly from all developing countries. In this regard, it was felt that a Board meeting should be convened at the earliest.

Our Group has considerable technological resources and expertise which we are keen to put to the service of industrialisation, rural development, employment generation and building a social infrastructure in developing countries. Cooperation in the setting up of small-scale industries especially in Africa is of particular relevance and we agreed to extend full support through appropriate project.

We welcomed the offer by the Government of Senegal to coordinate project on the transfer of technology and development with

a focus on food production, energy and health. We welcomed the proposal by the Government of Egypt on establishment of South-South Renewable Energy Promotion Centre, which is geared to exchange of information and the use of existing capabilities in member countries in this field. We also welcomed the proposal of the Government of Egypt for cooperation in the design, execution and management of petroleum, gas and petrochemical projects.

We agreed to hone our consultative mechanisms by providing for meetings of our Ministers of foreign affairs, economy, trade, agriculture, environment and science and technology on a regular basis in the inter-Summit period. This would not only deepen our understanding on these policy areas but also lay the practical foundation for cooperation among our countries. We are aware that our decisions will have to be continuously followed up and translated into action on the ground. We expect that the Summit's declared commitment will ensure that our national administrations, with the active support of our industry and business would involve themselves in this task and produce results.

We would use ministerial and other consultative mechanisms to coordinate our approaches on specific global issues of common concern. The Group's mandate of engaging in a substantive dialogue on such issues with our partners in the North will be actively pursued through interactions at multilateral fora. The G-15 initiative on a constructive and focused dialogue with the G-7 will be carried forward.

The Summit provided us an opportunity to evaluate the international situation and exchange perceptions on issues of critical importance to peace and development in our times. We undertook a '*tour de horizon*' of the economic, political, environmental and social challenges that we the developing countries face in common, and shared our experiences in meeting these challenges. We affirmed the equal importance of attention to peace and development in a restructured and democratised UN if we are to realise a more equitable, prosperous and secure world order.

The world trading order that is emerging after seven long years of negotiation in the Uruguay Round engaged our attention. We expect that the Round will fulfil its promise of propelling our growth through new and expanded market access in areas of current and potential interest to us. Further, we look to the WTO as a guarantor of the rights of the weaker trading partners and as a safety net against arbitrary, unilateral and discriminatory protectionist action. In the coming months and years, we would have to work together for this. At the same time, while we are fully conscious of genuine social or environmental requirements and the need to fulfil them in our specific context, we will have to guard against new trade restricting tendencies in the developed countries using the pretext of social or environmental concerns, with the real aim of nullifying the comparative advantage of the economies of the South, such as raw materials, simple life styles, climate wage structure, etc.

Keeping these factors in mind, it was agreed that our Ministers could meet at Marrakesh on the occasion of the concluding Conference on the Uruguay Round, with a view to ensuring coordination amongst us.

Our discussions on the substantive and organisational aspects of the Group have yielded positive results and it is my hope that the Group will influence policies, decisions and events that directly impinge on our individual and collective well-being.

We welcomed the offer made by the President of Argentina to host our fifth Summit Meeting and look forward to meeting in Buenos Aires in 1995. We also welcomed and accepted the offer made by the President of Zimbabwe to host our sixth Summit in 1996.

As this Summit draws to a close, we look forward to the future. We are confident that under the wise and able stewardship of President Menem, the G-15 will prosper and advance towards the realisation of its potential. I would like to assure him of our fullest cooperation in this noble endeavour which is the cherished goal of all our countries and peoples.

Challenges Before the ESCAP

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome you all to India. As founder members of ESCAP, we feel indeed very honoured that Government of India has been given the proud opportunity to once again host an annual session of the United Nation's Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. It is a special privilege to be hosting the 50th session of this august body. For Asia and the Pacific region, ESCAP has been the torch bearer and catalyst for economic and social development and has provided an added impetus to the process of growth in this region. India has been an active participant in ESCAP activities since its very inception and attaches immense significance to its achievements.

I am quite certain that deliberations over the next few days would be distinctly useful and would, contribute further towards promoting the spirit of regional cooperation for the overall development of this region. I hope also that this 50th session of ESCAP would be a landmark session, which would provide the vision for a peaceful future for this region and the world at large.

This session is taking place at a crucial juncture of contemporary history. The world economic and political scene has witnessed great changes in recent times. We have seen the disappearance of the so-called superpower rivalry and the era of the cold war. These have created expectations of a peaceful future and fostered an environment conducive to the enhancement of regional cooperation in the social and economic fields. The world is witnessing a general movement of the restructuring of economies away from command and control systems to market based ones. The winds of change have affected Asia also. The unifying forces of development in the region should cement mutual relations and create a climate of confidence and faith. It is my considered perception that development is the key issue, the common denominator and unifying element for any successful initiative for peace. We should, therefore, together strive for development.

The world economic scenario presents a varied picture. While in certain parts, such as the developed countries, great progress has been made, presently recession is creating economic problems. There are other parts, though not yet as developed, that are witnessing substantial and consistently high rates of growth. This establishes the complementarity that needs to be exploited for securing overall global welfare. The fast growing economies provide just the opportunities that the economies in recession require, to achieve revival. It is important that this should be understood by the developed and developing countries alike. The need of our times is for cooperation—not confrontation. The countries of the North need to appreciate the desire of the developing countries to catch up with the rest of the world. It would be counter-productive to create problems on narrow short-term considerations. It is in this perspective that the free flow of resources, capital, technology and market access have become more relevant than ever to give a strong impetus to global economic growth.

The successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round should also go a long way in allaying the perception that the world trading system is being fragmented by closed economic regional groups and inward looking trade blocks. It would also provide an impetus to the reform process being undertaken in several countries by bringing nearer the possibilities and opportunities provided by globalisation. We hope that all will cooperate so that the benefits of the Round are truly global. It would be a great opportunity lost to the whole world if instead of concentrating efforts to globalise the benefits flowing from the Round, fresh impediments are introduced in the form of unjustified controversies. While developing countries and developed countries alike must share action to deal with genuine social and environmental concerns, we should not countenance any moves to put these concerns on the trade agenda, with the thinly veiled intention to nullify the comparative advantage of developing countries.

The 50th session of ESCAP is an opportune time for assessing and evaluating the challenges before the Asia-Pacific region and ESCAP for determining appropriate responses to these challenges. Reasons of history, geography and culture have lent to this region a

distinct Asia-Pacific ethos which joins together the mosaic of cultures and ethnic groups constituting this region. The economies here have achieved some of the highest growth rates in the world today, and have become the subject of analyses for economic and political planners all over the world. Trade and flow of investment within the region has grown phenomenally, giving this region the basis for forging the distinct Asian-Pacific identity and unity.

The development of this identity can be realised if the subregional cooperation groupings such as SAARC and ASEAN can serve as building blocks towards developing and strengthening inter-subregional and region-wise cooperation. We are observing a general tendency of national boundaries going down. Even the subregional groupings are expanding as is illustrated in the emergence of APEC. It is necessary to address the economic and social issues before us in a wider framework than national/subregional perspectives. The economic and social development programmes needed in this region are well known and have already been institutionalised under ESCAP. There is need for strengthening these under the one single umbrella of ESCAP rather than duplicating and dividing them. ESCAP should thus play the role of a coordinator and catalyst for the promotion of region-wise trade and economic cooperation and for strengthening the economic ties between the subregional groupings. In this forum, programmes for cooperation can be developed and refined with greater success, since it combines both regional and non-regional members.

Here, I must also recount the many challenges before us for the 21st century. Fifty-eight per cent of the world's population lives in the ESCAP region. A large number of countries continue to battle against poverty, deprivation and unemployment. We have to find solutions of these problems which inevitably involves reforms, but the reforms must have a human face. The pace, range and scope of restructuring programmes should not burden those sections of society least able to bear them. This represents a major challenge so that social equity and traditional values which weave and bind together the social fabric of nations is safeguarded. In order to promote employment, it is neces-

sary to accelerate economic growth. Massive upgradation of the quality of education, health care, housing, transport and other social and physical infrastructure are also called for. Though implementation of policies and programmes to alleviate poverty are primarily the responsibility of member countries, the support of UN bodies and specialised inter-governmental organisations in this gigantic task is essential. The participation of communities and other community based non-governmental organisations is also crucial. We in India have set up a Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) to promote voluntary action. Members of ESCAP need to share our common experiences in these areas. Poverty alleviation must be addressed on priority if the goal of sustainable development is to be achieved. The recently adopted ESCAP project for networking of poverty alleviation programmes in seven SAARC districts is an excellent example of how we can address such issues together.

The problem of environmental degradation is yet another issue which assume gigantic proportions in the coming century if no serious efforts are made to check it. The problem has already arisen because of excessive exploitation of nature and rapid growth of population. The apparent dichotomy between development and environmental protection has been resolved and it is accepted today that the two are inseparable. Sustainable development should no longer be exclusively of interest and concern to environmentalists but should become a part and parcel of the development policy of each country. The Rio Declaration on environmental development and Agenda 21 is a comprehensive declaration with a broad charter of principles which not only addresses the present environmental and development problems but also aims at preparing the world for the challenges of the next century. All ESCAP member countries should endeavour to adopt this. Legitimate concern for environmental preservation and upgradation should not, however, be made the alibi for raising of protectionist trade barriers, since it is only augmentation of trade and technology flows which would provide the necessary resources for a transition to more environmentally friendly products and processes.

Development of the infrastructure is, indeed, the key to address the twin issues of generating economic growth and meeting the basic needs of society. In this context, the choice of the theme topic of this session of the Commission is appropriate and timely. The region's economic success of the past few years and the recent economic restructuring in the region has fuelled the urgency for improvement in its infrastructure. Huge investments are, however, required in this area. Given resource constraints, fulfilment of such investment level will need assistance from multilateral financial institutions and external sources. There is vast scope for cooperation amongst the countries of the region in development of infrastructure areas such as energy, communications transport, etc. Wider sharing of technology, expertise and financial resources is essential. The benefits of this will be regional and cut across national frontiers and boundaries.

It is heartening to know that the Committee for Regional Economic Cooperation for ESCAP has been addressing issues of intra-regional trade and investment-related technology and technological capability development. There is, indeed, a great need to strengthen the level and pattern of technology, investment and trade flows between countries. Adequate measures need to be taken to transfer technologies from the advanced regions to the less advanced countries. Suitable assistance also needs to be given to the less developed countries to promote investment and to facilitate its absorption. Promotion of small and medium industries in these economies may yield great benefits. In order to make these industries, vehicles of export led growth, investment in the requisite technology and technical information need to be put on priority.

The benefits of human capital formation and technology development should also be shared amongst the countries of the ESCAP region. ESCAP has over the years built a network of institutions and agencies. The Government of India has also been actively involved in contributing to these agencies, and has recently provided headquarters to the Asia and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology in Delhi. These institutions play a key role in extending scientific and technological inputs into the less developed economies. Opportunities are vast,

not just amongst ESCAP institutions but among the numerous centres of excellence that have been nurtured and developed in different parts of the region. The result of their research and scholarship should be disseminated widely.

It is in the shared interest of all members to increase the pace of socio-economic development in the entire ESCAP region. It is the great dynamism and inherent vitality of this region that gives us the confidence and will to re-dedicate ourselves towards intensifying efforts for regional and inter-subregional cooperation with a view to comprehensively realising this potential. I would like to appeal to all participating countries with particular reference to members of the Asia-Pacific region to accord overriding priority and unconditional support to the imperatives of economic cooperation, including trade, investment, technology transfer and tourism over other aspects of mutual relations so that the socio-economic infrastructure necessary for sustaining the growth momentum in this region and for improving the quality of life of all its people can be effectively addressed.

It is in this spirit of Asian-Pacific cooperation that we look forward to the 50th session of ESCAP to provide us the vision that will guide us to the 21st century—a century that we seek to approach together with much hope and confidence. I wish your deliberations and endeavours all success and hereby declare open the 50th annual session of ESCAP.

Indo-US Partnership in Development

I AM MOST delighted to be with you this afternoon. Delighted and upbeat at my interaction with the Greater Houston Partnership, which represents a wide variety of industrial and business enterprises. I am fully conscious of the fact that many of the companies represented here have a reach that cuts across continents and, what is very significant to me is that many of the great enterprises represented here have a presence in my own country. There are quite a few leaders of American industry present here who not only know India well but are great friends of India as well. AMOCCO, Enron, Texas Instruments, EPIC Kellogg, J.C. Penny, Dell Computers and Pennzoil come to mind at once. There are several others, so I am gratified that I am starting the business part of my visit with a dialogue with you.

I am deeply impressed by the Greater Houston Partnership. It has a flavour that is at once Houstonian, American and global. It is for very good reasons that Houston has been described the “energy capital of the world.” You can justly be proud of your achievements. The range of industries here is very wide indeed : power, hydrocarbons, electronics, computers, medicine, food processing, telecommunications. May be Mr Chairman, I should ask you, what is it that you don't have here !

When I look around at such an impressive array of modern technology and industrial entrepreneurship, it is clear to me that this gathering is a courtesy extended as a recognition of what India means to the world today, particularly in terms of the economic reforms initiated recently. These policies have brought in their wake a number of economic successes such as sizeable flows of foreign investment, lowering of inflation, a hefty build up of foreign exchange reserves and an excellent export growth. Today, against the background of these successes, I would like to reassure you, if that is at all required, that we

are pressing ahead with the reforms vigorously. They have led to the deregulation and debureaucratisation of many of the past regimes. Export and import policies have been liberalised, tariffs have been lowered, the rupee has been made convertible on current account and a friendly environment backed by appropriate enabling structures has been created to encourage vigorously direct foreign investment. There is no desire to avoid competition. Efficiency is the key concept that informs our attitude to business and industry today. We are pursuing further reforms in the financial sector. It is against this background that I have come here to invite you, in person, to invest in India and be honoured partners in India's development.

India has several strengths that attract and justify capital investment. It is a huge market. It has the world's third largest pool of technical manpower, with a capacity to absorb any technology, however sophisticated. It has several other relative advantages. By investing in our economy, benefits would accrue to us as well as to the American industry.

India, like the United States has a federal structure of governance. But we have, by and large, minimised the time lag that Central policies are likely to take to reach the States and get translated into action. The Centre-State interaction in this matter has been streamlined and speeded up considerably. A happy development these days is that there is a healthy competition among the various States in the matter of attraction of foreign investment and they are vying with one another in offering more incentives, more facilities and speedier clearance so that you have a choice in deciding where you wish to go.

It is against this background of an atmosphere in which you would be made to feel welcome, that I am once again extending the invitation to you to invest in India and be our partners in a joint effort for mutual benefit. I look forward to a positive response from you.

New Challenges of Unipolarity

THANK YOU FOR inviting me to this great centre of learning, where men and women have joined to engage in unique process of intellectual interaction and enlightenment. They broaden their mental horizons and in the process, make a contribution to human thought. Today, I aspire at least to the former.

“One soul animates all men”, wrote Emerson, one of the great Harvard alumni. The spirit of enquiry allows no limit to intellectual quest. One of the highest functions of the human mind is to understand the diversity that constitutes the human condition and in that spirit, to celebrate the freedom of expressing that diversity, we treasure as democracies, to value debate, to accommodate differing viewpoints and above all, to shed prejudice.

The tide in the affairs of humanity is throwing us increasingly upon the rocks of fragmentation and disorder, placing increasing strains upon our carefully nurtured definitions of democracy and freedom. It is difficult to delineate these strains along the so-called fault-lines between civilizations, whatever the superficial evidence, India cannot think of a division of civilizations; we see man as an attribute of synthesis which translates itself into secularism exemplified, for instance, by the Indian nation-state. Yes, there are tempests now and then; but no tempest is known to have permanently changed the ocean.

Geographically, the sun shines on India and America but for a little while simultaneously. But symbolically, here is something for us to do. I believe that this period of sunshine can and must be expanded. I use this metaphor because one equivalent of “sun” also means “friend”—*mitra* in Sanskrit. Monocultural absolutes are, or ought to be, on the way out in world affairs. The interaction of human beings essentially has to involve some negotiation, some learning from each other's perception within a framework of coexistence and mutual benefit.

Visiting the United States, an Indian gets the strange feeling of having got off a 'Time Machine'. The past is a constant point of reference for us; tradition seems safer, more warm and secure, even if sometimes irrational or even harmful. We tend to justify our present actions in terms of the past, but there is also a constant effort to break away from it. Here, on the other hand, your predominant orientation is in terms of the future. The pitfalls of the atavistic approach are well-known. But what is not always apparent is that eyes fixed only on the future or on the past tend to ignore the present. Often enough, the present has been oppressed both by future utopians and past shibboleths. I feel the need for a balance, a sense of continuum that is time, because the subconscious feeling of being without a past or without a future could lead to avoidable attitudes and distorted relationships. It is from the present and the now that we must build a bridge to the future.

There is not one idea in the world that has not been propounded and stoutly controverted in India. So is the case, I believe, with America. We do not brook intellectual colonisation. In the field of economics, for instance, some major views have come from this distinguished University. They are forceful, but often contradictory. Any idea from here, therefore, has the great advantage that it brings a plural option with it. And yet, the rainbow of ideas gets fused into one monochromatic beam when America perceives the world beyond; it can then tend to make judgments in simple, strong shades of black and white, right and wrong. The richness of various hues of every phenomenon in human affairs gets subsumed in those simplified contrasts. The world, however, does not change by being so slotted.

This is ironical because pluralism in America, as in India, has arisen as a historical inevitability. America believes in unity in diversity, while in the Indian concept unity represents truth, diversity signifies its manifestations. The diversity had different origins, of immigration in your case, of frequent invasions in ours. Hope and dynamism informed our unity, the hope inspired by the end of the colonial condition in your case; the dynamism of the diverse streams coming together in ours. Through the centuries, we have not allowed diversity to become divisive, except for one single event in 1947. Nation building has been

extremely difficult for us, since it was premised on positive factors throughout; we had no notional adversary to rally sentiment against, whenever needed.

In this long stretch of national endeavour, we have had a varied experience, now stumbling, now sprinting. The latest event, if I may say so, is that we have recently embarked upon a process of economic liberalisation. It was only liberalisation, not substitution, since we had had an ongoing, well-entrenched market system for ages. So it has been possible for us to fashion our liberalisation as well thought-out programme, based on an assessment of the current situation, both local and global, as well as anticipated future developments. It remains part of our development effort; the objective has not changed. We have hit the right road and the direction has been set. The way is only forward.

Yes, there is considerable criticism from some sections. This criticism is important, since it illustrates the strange line-up of hostile forces when a serious, systematic change is undertaken. But our reform has the general approval of the people. Therefore, it runs no risk whatever of dilution, far less of reversal.

What are mere disparities in affluent countries become dual economies when they occur in the poorer ones. Upward mobility is obstructed by strong and inflexible social structures. Thus, it is feared that the dynamism of globalisation may benefit only one of the dual economies. The other is not even left unaffected, it is, in fact, affected adversely. At some point, therefore, the growing distance between the two, suddenly goes beyond endurance and creates tremendous internal, social and economic strains, throwing the whole liberalisation programme itself into disarray and delay.

This is why it is important to ensure also sizeable and simultaneous benefits to the lower layers. We cannot wait for the trickle down; we need to engineer a bypass by investing massive resources for the benefit of the poorer sections, particularly in the rural areas, directly from the State's resources. Smooth assimilation is the crux. I consider this to be the correct and lasting way to globalisation whose bottom line is partnership, not annexation.

We need investment in people and in infrastructure; the package is inseparable and indispensable. Government took care of both investments in the past; the results, while beneficial in several respects, have fallen short of overall expectations and requirements. We have now assigned a large portion of infrastructure investment to private enterprise on a global scale, while Government takes on the bulk of the responsibility for investment in human resources, as also for rural development in general.

Unlike in some developed countries, unemployment is not a marginal or fractional phenomenon for us. Looking closely, one can perhaps find a nexus between the lack of full employment on the one hand and the emergence of multiple economies in the society on the other. There is a low level equilibrium in the less affluent societies which has to be shaken if development is to take place. Work is, therefore, the primary weapon necessary for dealing with this poverty. Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of welfare for all, *Sarvodaya*, meant not just the advancement of the greatest number. This total concept is dominant in India's social philosophy down the ages and has been articulated quite unambiguously.

Incisive and socially concerned thinkers from great institutions such as yours have forced us all in recent years to reconsider the goals of development. We have begun to recognise our responsibility for preserving the environment and the finite resources of this planet. Nevertheless, the original sin endures, namely, the equating of happiness with consumerism, which translates, in plain terms, as equating the quantum of happiness with the quantum of consumption. Professor Galbraith has written of the wisdom needed to perceive the difference between luxury and necessity; a wisdom all the more important in a world where the distinction between the two tends to be ignored.

It is only this development in the conventional sense which still elicits admiration and generates national power, making the past achievement of the developed nations, the future goal of the developing ones. As a result, no developing country is proceeding on a path different from the profligate one on which the developed countries have

travelled earlier. This demands formulation of viable and consistent parameters of development which take into account the critical collision towards which the diminishing resources of the planet and its increasing population are headed.

Institutions like Harvard face this intellectual challenge, since you are the trend-setters. I attach great importance to this because no society can act in the absence of a trend. Speaking for India, I submit that we have to find an equilibrium to be achieved among three factors, viz.

- i) the level of material benefit necessary for a human being to attain his full creative potential;
- ii) the level of exploitation of nature consistent with its needs to replenish itself and
- iii) the need to ensure comparable benefit to the vast masses of people and lift the social pyramid as a whole.

This approach is not a mechanical compromise or an idealistic package. It accepts the realities of the present day world, the values of liberal democracy and the limits on the state which globalisation of trade will require. It accepts the necessity and the efficiency of the market. But it finds its appropriate balance by determining the ends of economic development that a country can and should pursue. It involves defining, to the extent possible, what the word 'good' means, when we are seeking to achieve the greatest 'good' of the greatest number. Consumer satisfaction undoubtedly gives pleasure, and pleasure is an essential ingredient of 'good' but pleasure and 'good' cannot be taken as identical. There must surely be a social, psychological and perhaps spiritual content of 'good' which is not purely market-determined. And I believe there is.

In developed countries, the income of the unemployed is protected to an extent through social welfare; yet social problems still constantly arise. This has compelled a realisation of the role of work in the human psyche. The basic role of action in the human psyche is stated in the Indian tradition when Sri Krishna says in the *Bhagavad*

Gita that, “there is nothing for the Supreme Being to attain, and yet I engage in action.”

Compensated unemployment cannot, therefore, be a substitute for employment. This is not merely an economic phenomenon. It has important social and psychological factors besides being a corollary of the dynamics of creation. Unemployment becomes a symbol of rejection, of being unwanted in society. And society itself, engrossed in its own arduous struggle for existence, is generally not able to care for its dispossessed, particularly when the numbers involved are so large. In India, for instance, numbers have become so crucial that development today is being nullified to a large extent by the galloping population. The former has to be stepped up, while the latter is brought to a predictable and manageable level.

From the development standpoint, a galaxy of distinguished scholars, Indian and foreign, have assessed India's prospects for a long time. The main points of the assessment maybe summed up as follows.

- a) That despite the Green Revolution, the population may outstrip food production, resulting in food deficits;
- b) The sophisticated genetic engineering technologies will not assure uniform benefits and small farmers may be deprived of them, accentuating agrarian disparities;
- c) That India requires the right technology in industrialisation to be compatible with the requirement of massive employment;
- d) That the development of human resources is inadequate and
- e) That the assurance of national unity and integrity remains a question mark.

It is not my intention to use this platform exclusively to publicise India. But I think it is my duty to dispel some misgivings which, if they persist, affect the chances of my economic globalisation programme, only because things have not been put in perspective. I hope this justifies my effort.

Let me first take up the problem of population. And let me first say that, in the interest of good neighbourly relations, India has no

desire to overtake China in this area. My figures do not point to this possibility, although some forecasts suggest it. Our common creditor, the World Bank, seems to support my view. Be that it may, the figure at which India's population is said to get stabilised varies rather widely, between 1.2 billion and 1.8 billion. The higher projected figure means that our population will get doubled in, say seventy or eighty years.

The question is to double our foodgrain production in a similar period. Self-sufficiency in foodgrains through the Green Revolution in the mid-sixties has been the largest single factor in the recovery of our economy at home and enhancement of prestige abroad, even while many economists emphatically predicted nothing but disaster on this front. The first point to be noted, in this connection, is that for more than two decades, Green Revolution was confined to just three and a half States not even among the big ones in the country. Many other States had it very marginally or not at all. As a result, the wide disparity between kilogrammes per acre yields in different States has persisted. In the case of rice, the difference is in the range of 700 kgs and 3300 kgs, while in wheat it ranges between 600 kgs to 3000 kgs. These disparities are at once hopeless and highly hopeful. The distinct possibilities of enhancing yields severalfold and the further fact that the Green Revolution has now begun to travel into the low-yield but high land fertility clearly indicates that there is no danger whatsoever of India becoming deficit in foodgrains. We can take care both of increased population as well as enhanced levels of consumption. We have also achieved near self-sufficiency in edible oil, which had caused a drain on our foreign exchange reserves. We are again making massive investments in agriculture along with many of the latest modern techniques, including genetic engineering. There is a dramatic spurt in our agricultural exports within just the past two or three years. The continued soundness and adequacy of our agricultural economy, which is basic to our development, is thus assured. There should be no room for doubts on this score.

The misgivings in regard to disparities are also not quite valid. Apart from the known fact that we have millions of medium, small and marginal farmers in India, the application of land ceiling laws through-

out the country has narrowed down disparities in land holdings drastically and proved beyond doubt that given the necessary inputs, the size of the holding has no bearing on per acre yields. Indeed, the Green Revolution was itself the miracle wrought in small and medium holdings. As a farmer, I can personally testify to this.

When we take employment as an economic activity, the conundrum of the right technology confronts us. If we take to gigantism to obtain economies of scale, we accept sophisticated technology which replaces man with machine, accentuating unemployment and imposing heavy social costs. On the other hand, if we inevitably accept the route of large-scale employment, with old technology and low wages, the large mass of people, as well as their economic activity, including the product thereof, remain at a primitive level in quality.

Obviously, both these positions are unacceptable. There are six factors involved here: size, environmental acceptability, cost, quality, technology and employment potential. Environmental acceptability and quality are obviously *sine qua non*. If the objective is to maximise employment potential and minimise the per unit size at more or less the same cost, the only imponderable that remains to be determined is technology. I see no alternative for populous developing countries but to develop these technologies of the future. One may call them the "Laptop" models which possess all the six attributes, I have just mentioned.

In course of time, this has to be the pattern of industrialisation in the entire developing world. And in populous countries where millions of jobs are involved, it needs to be accorded higher priority. If the developed countries, with their huge R & D establishment, could work in tandem with developing countries, that could be the ideal form of North-South cooperation. Moreover, developed countries themselves would have to jettison their polluting technologies and the culture of gigantism earlier than later, for compelling environmental reasons. That would make the interests of all mankind coincide, regardless of developed or developing. The rich and the poor of the whole are thus locked in a three-legged race and simply cannot break free from each other.

This long-term scenario is valid, to the extent leaders of the world decide, and the people who elected them agree, that the world, after all, is worth saving beyond their own generation and that it is never too late to return to sanity. In the meantime, India has to find employment for its teeming millions through industrialisation and needs huge investments in infrastructure, agriculture and irrigation, apart from roads, railways and ports. I have come to extend my hand of partnership in this adventure—a partnership between countries having so much in common, and so close already in multifaceted cooperation. This is an important purpose of my present visit to the United States.

With the huge outlays on infrastructure hopefully being taken care of by the private sector as envisaged in the new liberalisation programme, the prospect of the human sector has brightened immeasurably overnight. We have planned that the national outlay on education in India will be raised upward so as to reach 6 per cent of the GDP by the end of the century: the present level is 3.7 per cent. With government, the universities and the industry, jointly and severally, continuing to give a new boost to scientific research and development, a new era of technological breakthrough at the national level is assured, along with a massive conversion of unskilled into skilled workers in the countryside. This, coupled with the highest ever outlays on rural development, particularly rural employment, is bound to go to a long way in waking the sleeping giant that is rural India. These ambitions have now become entirely feasible and are clearly in sight, solely as a consequence of the private sector stepping in a big way into the infrastructure segment, a prospect at once exciting and full of exponential possibilities.

Millions of words have been written since India's independence on the prospects of the survival of democracy and political stability in India. This massive scholastic interest in my country is welcome, and the fact that most forecasts have turned out to be wrong does not detract from their profundity. India is today the largest democracy in the world with regular elections, at all levels, with a large number of political parties, national, regional and local. Democratic institutions at the grass roots level, called Panchayats, have now been accorded

Constitutional status. Empowerment of women has received unprecedented primacy. The people have tried and tested almost every political party by entrusting governmental responsibility to it and even as the head of the country's largest and oldest political party, with a history of 110 years, I find myself perpetually on tenterhooks! In fact, my party is judged more stringently than the others—a special token of the people's hope, that gives rise to both expectation and exasperation. My own Government, which started with a minority, is about to complete three of its five year term firmly in the saddle. As for its capacity to take far-reaching decisions, the policy changes brought about in these three years, their sweep and implications, are by now well-known and speak for themselves.

Yes, we do have many languages, castes, religions, races and classes. We have occasional clashes and agitations. But what one can discern only on a more careful observation is the revealing fact that life in the whole countryside remains calm and stable. During the entire period of eleven years when Punjab witnessed violent agitation, that State's agricultural production remained the first in the country, and it never lost its place of eminence in any parameter of development. Agitation did not abridge achievement. And finally, whatever pessimists may predict, India will remain India, with its unmatched attractions such as a huge and growing market, a friendly and talented people, political and institutional stability and a bright future by any reckoning. And India will have her friends at Harvard. All else is inconsequential or incidental.

Jawaharlal Nehru named India's economic system as 'Mixed Economy'; not a mechanical part—admixture of the other two systems, but a complete system by itself, in which some features of the other two happened to find place. This, again, is symbolic, and rooted in her tradition. True to the liberal tradition of which your great institution is a custodian—India has never looked at progress as a single, unidirectional straight and narrow path. It has always been cyclical in its outlook. For every assertion, there is a negation, for every postulate, a counter-postulate. There can never be only One. If there is Zero (*shunya*), there is also infinity (*poorna*). In between, if there is One,

there must be Another. Therefore, one society cannot completely be replicated in another, each has to fashion its own way for itself.

However, one fact has become abundantly clear, that the roles of the state and the market are essentially distinct and complete usurpation of the role of the one by the other is neither possible nor desirable. While assigning the exact role to each at a given time, the current situation in the society has necessarily to be taken into account. And neither will wither away, no matter what one hypnotises oneself to believe in a given context. But the transition to the post cold war world, welcome as it is, is likely to be even more difficult than ending the cold war. The days of celebrating the demise of a system are over. The contours of a different world have begun to emerge, a world so different from the world of blocs and deterrences that we had not even imagined that it could still reappear. But cold war attitudes persist not because there is anything permanently valid about them but because their removal inevitably takes time and even more than time, the genuine realisation that the whole context of human destiny has really changed.

This change needs a change of the mind-set. I firmly believe that beyond the very limited processes of diplomacy and inter-state relations, there is an immeasurably vast expanse in which all the tiny specks that make up humankind are surprisingly equal. To capture the spirit of that equality leading to unity is the new challenge of the unipolarity whose advent we are witnessing today. History does not often present such a decisive opportunity. We miss it at our own peril. As two human organisations so different, yet so much akin, I hope and pray that India and America will prove themselves, as only the two of them can.

Indo-US Relations on Threshold of a Bold New Era

IT IS WITH great pleasure and a deep sense of honour that I address you today. Standing in this august hall, as two great Indian statesmen did before me, is an inspiration to all, who hold democracy and freedom above all else. If, as Thomas Carlyle once wrote, “the history of the world is but the biography of great men,” then much of the world's recent history is owed to these chambers.

The histories of our two nations have been intertwined by the words and deeds of great men and women. Christopher Columbus set off to discover a new route to India, only to discover a new world. Out of that unintended discovery was born a great nation. Undaunted by, rather big difference, he discovered in his destination, Columbus remarked, this time with perfect accuracy, that the more you go East, the more you are assured to come upon the West. Thus America has a special place in the Indian thinking, as a continent found further east of the known East. This direction is significant in its own way.

In his first inaugural address, Thomas Jefferson spoke of, “freedom of religion, freedom of Press, and freedom of person under the protection of *habeas corpus*, and trial by juries impartially selected.” When India gained independence, we accepted these fundamental freedoms, and looked to the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights while formulating the Constitution of the world's largest democracy. Now, both countries are forever joined by the shared values of secularism, political pluralism and the rule of law.

The spirit of America's Declaration of Independence so moved Indian spiritual leader, Swami Vivekananda that on July 4, 1898, he wrote a poem titled, “To the Fourth of July”—

“Move on, O Lord, in the resistless path!
Till the high noon overspreads the world,
Till every land reflects Thy light,
Till men and women with uplifted head
Behold their shackles broken, and
Know in springtime joy, their life renewed.”

The author Henry David Thoreau was influenced by the early Indian philosophy and thought, from which he drew his inspiration for the essay, “Duty of Civil Disobedience.” He wrote, “if the law is of such a nature that it requires you to be an agent of injustice to another, then I say, break the law, let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine.”

Thoreau's essay influenced Mahatma Gandhi tremendously while he was in South Africa, and in fact gave him the inspiration for the great non-violent civil disobedience he was to practise in the subsequent years so effectively. I am sure, his spirit showers his choicest blessings on free and democratic South Africa today.

In turn, Gandhi inspired Dr Martin Luther King, who learned of Gandhi that “non-violent resistance paralysed and confused the power structure against which it was directed.” Dr King wrote that “Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals, to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. It was in this Gandhian emphasis on love and non-violence that I discovered the method of social reform that I had been seeking for so many months.”

Thus the United States and India have learned a great deal from each other throughout history. Distances did not matter. Indeed distances never mattered in the transmission of ideas, because their medium is the mind. They travel at what is known as *mano-vega* in the Indian tradition, meaning the speed of the mind, higher than anything anyone has ever imagined or can ever imagine.

So ideas, and born of them ideals, have echoed back and forth between India and America. Some perceived them, some experienced them, others did not, as often happens. Swami Vivekananda, Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Thoreau, Emerson, Martin Luther King and many others, known and unknown—all these names seemed to belong to one nation—of human beings. Hundreds of American missionaries spread into the remotest tribal areas of India, learned their complicated languages and numberless dialects and served the people there with unparalleled devotion. I am personally acquainted with some of their sons and daughters, and a few who were born in my own district.

For over a century grew this great friendship, a relationship purely between the peoples, with no trace of domination or selfish motive of any kind. Americans rejoiced in India's political freedom. India for ever acknowledges the debt we owe to Franklin Delano Roosevelt for his role in pleading with the British for India's independence. Everything looked fine.

We had the unique opportunity of shaping the history of the post-war world—a history which could have offered the peace dividend to all, East or West, North or South, by enabling countries to attain their full potential by giving their peoples the better life they deserved, but which they had been deprived of for ages.

Then came the cold war.....

That great opportunity seemed to be slipping through our fingers, even as we tried to hold it in our hands. Today, we have to worry about the fingers.

I shall now skip the cold war. Not being a historian, I am under no obligation to recount it. Being transient, term-bound representatives of our peoples, you and I have neither the time nor the need to review what we do not wish to repeat. It is the future we have to think about, in fact worry about. And, of course, the fingers.

The fingers are simply, democracy and development. From my own personal experience, I have no doubt that this is an extremely difficult combination—and equally essential, in India's view.

India has undertaken the first steps to shaping of our history for the next generation. After decades of centralised economic policies, India recently embarked on a reform programme designed to modernise our economy, liberalise trade and realise our economic potential. We welcomed private investment and competition and encouraged free market growth. As a result, India is becoming globally competitive and the standard of living of her citizens is gradually on the rise. The momentum of these reforms will carry India into the next century as the single largest free market in the world.

Perhaps, the most impressive part of India's ambitious economic reform programme is the smoothness with which the transition from a closed, protected economy to an open export-oriented economy has occurred. Far-reaching changes have been undertaken in a short span of three years, at the same time, devising prompt and effective steps to obviate severe social consequences, which could have threatened future reforms. With these steps, coupled with popular support and a broad consensus across India's diverse political spectrum, the reform process has now acquired a momentum of its own.

The impact of the changes in India has had a profound effect on Indo-US economic relations and has benefited both the countries. American firms have been in the forefront of forging a new economic relationship. India's vast domestic market, huge educated, skilled and semi-skilled work force, sound financial institutions and time-tested and democratic system offer tremendous investment opportunities for forward-looking companies.

In shaping our history for the next century, we must look ahead to greater trade between nations. An unfortunate by-product of the past half century was the introduction of weapons of mass destruction around the world. The difficult and complex question of nuclear weapons proliferation can be effectively addressed only when we consider their global reach, requiring similar global solutions.

Every nation, large or small, rich or poor, is sovereign and possesses an inherent right and responsibility to its people to ensure

their security. I firmly believe that the way to ridding the world of weapons of mass destruction lies in creating a world order based on the universal principles of equality and non-discrimination as a means of enhancing security. The answer that we as nations choose, will shape the destiny of the world in the coming century.

Progress has been made in establishing an international consensus for banning nuclear weapons testing and halting production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons purposes. India and the US have worked closely together in helping to forge this international consensus. To consolidate these gains, further meaningful steps should be taken towards de-nuclearisation, which the international situation now allows.

And so much more remains to be done. A nuclear 'no first use' agreement, indeed an agreement to outlaw the use of nuclear weapons is necessary in the short-term by way of precaution, while serious multilateral negotiations are launched for nuclear disarmament, the objective being a nuclear free world.

Mr President, the last five years have seen the world become more complex. As old animosities are unleashed by the changes taking place around the world, we hear demands for self-determination.

But such a cry when heard in firmly established secular and free democracies like India is totally irrelevant. Such a cry, indeed, was attempted to be made in the United States in the year 1861 and President Abraham Lincoln in his first inaugural address on 4 March 1861 had said;

"I hold that, in contemplation of Universal Law and of the constitution, the union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination—physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them.

A husband and wife maybe divorced and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other, but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them.”

Indeed, in 1968 your Supreme Court had to say, “When Texas became one of the United States, she entered into an indissoluble relation—all the obligations of perpetual union and all the guarantees of Republican Government in the union, attached at once to the State—it was the incorporation of a new member into the political body. And it was complete and final...”

India accepts this statement as truly characteristic of a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious republic like India or the US and as totally unassailable.

It is the responsibility of nations to preserve the life and liberty of all their citizens under the law, regardless of race, religion and ethnicity. We in India, like you here in this great democracy, are determined in our assertion that the rights of minority groups must be protected vigorously under the rule of law. Our Constitution provides for this, our people demand this and our heritage requires this.

The task that confronts democratic governments today is to maintain protection of human rights in the face of the most dangerous threat to the violation of human rights, namely the bullets of terrorists. India is committed to protecting its citizens from terrorism and no government worth its name can shirk this responsibility. We are taking scrupulous care to protect the rights of individuals under due process of law and punish human rights violations wherever they occur. In this difficult and delicate task, we are doing all that is humanly possible.

As regards the United Nations, it has long been a strong defender of the rights of all the world's citizens. We must therefore promote, in all possible ways, the original mandate of the United Nations—to provide ‘collective security’ as a means of achieving peace.

The UN framework for pursuing global security through international cooperation must be preserved, despite the problems and limitations that exist. The international community needs to strengthen the UN and provide more resources if we expect it to respond to today's challenges.

It is our strong feeling too, that the UN's decision-making bodies must more accurately reflect the regional situation of states in the world today. In order to chart a new course to navigate these troubled but exciting times, we need to recognise the role which many nations can play in the pursuit of peace.

Indo-US relations are on the threshold of a bold new era. We have seen unprecedented cooperation in a number of areas. Most recently Indian forces patrolled alongside US and UN forces in Somalia. We share common interests in addressing global environmental crises, combating international terrorism and stemming the tide of international narcotics trafficking. In these areas, the US and India have worked closely together.

Yet there remain areas where further cooperation is warranted. Export controls on technology, while once a useful means for controlling weapons technology, now hinder developing countries in their efforts to improve the lives of their people. Much of what is termed as dual technology, in fact, has vital applications in a modern civilian society. Many special materials and complicated computer processors found in missile control systems are also found in hospital intensive care units and global telecommunication systems.

In October 1949, India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had stated, "It was necessary, even desirable, and, perhaps, inevitable that India and the United States should know each other more and cooperate with each other more." This was in 1949. Later that year, Prime Minister Nehru predicted that the next hundred years are going to be the century of America.

The Prime Minister was right. The 20th century will be known as the American century. Throughout the last 100 years of American

and Indian history—through the peaks and valleys of Indo-US relations, Nehru's words have rung true and a bond has been forged, based on affinity and understanding. The success of Indian-Americans in this country reflects the understanding and mutual respect between the world's two largest democracies.

As India stands poised to contribute to global prosperity and peace in the next century, we look forward to continuing our partnership with America and with the American people.

India is one of the developing countries in which the process of development is firmly established. We have realised that no quick fixes are possible and that there is no substitute for hard work with full involvement of the people. The results achieved in India are commended by some, derided by others, on the basis of physical statistics. In all these appraisals, however, one crucial element that has not figured as it should, is the fact that India's progress has been achieved in a democratic set-up. This dimension, I submit, is extremely important. As an experienced activist in the Community Development process in India ever since it commenced in the early fifties, I can vividly recall the hurdles that we encountered in the path of development, for which many people blamed our democratic process. Many scholars and experts, including some from this country, told us that we were attempting the impossible, and that at any rate, we were heading for nothing but failure and frustration by attempting development under democratic conditions. It almost became a fashion to assert that democracy was inimical to development and was not suited to developing countries in their initial stages of development. It may also be recalled that several countries had deviated from the democratic system in those years in the name of ensuring development in the first instance, as they put it. These are all facts.

I am not merely recalling history. I would like to submit to this august assembly that the agenda for democracy is by no means over, all over the world. The principle of the system is perhaps universally accepted now, but even this acceptance is not unqualified. In the ultimate analysis, the survival and acceptance of any system would

depend crucially on its capacity to deliver the goods. This may not be so obvious in countries where democracy has become a way of life and the political process has got rooted in the principle for centuries, making it normal and unquestioned. But elsewhere, the temptation to cut corners for immediate benefits and the tendency to superficialise democracy while the real wielders of power only make it a mask—these are phenomena that should make genuine votaries of the system sit up and think.

I maybe forgiven for striking this new, if discordant, note in the orchestra of prevailing opinion. I submit, that the basic and most essential agenda of the world hereafter, perhaps through the next century, is the consolidation and concretisation of democracy. On this single plank, directly or indirectly, will depend the prospects of peace, disarmament and development—in one word, the survival of humankind. I am not referring to the processes of democracy but to its content which should, in essence, mean that the will of the ordinary citizen, as it is and not as it is manipulated for a given occasion, prevails. I do realise that this is a tall order; yet nothing less will do, if the dangers to democracy are to be met effectively. The 21st century must prove that development is best assured when democracy is assured.

The crux of the matter is, how much is the real stake in democracy that has been created for all people of the world, not just some? How effective is democracy in solving the problems of the people where it has been newly adopted? This is a crucial question for the system to take root in what may be called some what alien soils.

In developing countries, government is a serious matter. A much larger proportion of people are affected by changes in government there, than in affluent countries. This can be easily seen. It accounts for the heavier turnout of voters in developing countries when elections are held. By the same token, one could imagine the frustration and consequent erosion of faith in the system if the system fails to deliver. The success of democracy is, therefore, a very important part of political stability everywhere. The question therefore is: Since the bloc configuration, which did not, and perhaps could not, put any great

value on democracy then, is not such a compelling necessity now, what can the established democracies do for the success of their system in the world so that governments become transparent and are run according to the common aspirations of the common people everywhere? I have no ready-made answers, but I am sure that the task is worth taking note of. And I beseech your attention, as a tested and tempered person from the grass roots of a developing society who, in the footsteps of great stalwarts, struggled for freedom, attained freedom and has ever since been involved in consolidating that freedom—in a vast and complex country where nothing has been easy through the long centuries, where life has been a perpetual walk on a razor's edge.

There is another matter in which we come face to face with the need for responsibility, in thought and in action. It is a similar sense that must inform our tending of our planet's resources. The pace of development often prompts the appropriation—or misappropriation—of what is not ours, this generation's alone, legitimately. I recall the felicity with which I, in my campaign to be a State legislator, promised roads to my constituents forty years ago, we built the roads but lost the forests. That, perhaps, epitomises the dilemma of a development that must sustain itself and sustain the heritage within which it is rooted. Today's easy options could prove to be tomorrow's regrets; so it is in the quest of technologies that allow development with responsibility that we have yet another critical area for the partnership between India and America and our peoples.

Mr Vice President, two years ago you authored a book which one critic, very aptly, described as remarkable for a political figure, in that you wrote it yourself. Going through it with an interest compelled as much by your style as your subject, I came across an anecdote about Mahatma Gandhi that I had not chanced upon earlier. It bears repetition, and I hope you will allow me. Gandhiji, you write, was approached one day by a woman, concerned that her son ate too much sugar. She requested him to counsel her son about its harmful effects. The Mahatma promised to do so but asked her to return after a fortnight. This she did and Gandhiji advised the boy as he had promised. The mother was profuse in her gratitude but could not

conceal her puzzlement as to why Gandhiji had insisted on the interval of two weeks. He was honest in his reply, and said, “I needed the two weeks to stop eating sugar myself.”

We are now in the closing years of a century ravaged by war, made heroic by the scientific, intellectual and creative attainments of man, enfeebled by want and deprivation and yet made strong by our collective capacity to identify solutions that had eluded us in the past. We recognise those solutions, but like Gandhiji, we will have to take our two weeks to practise them before we acquire the authority to prescribe them to others. That, in a sense, is what responsibility is all about.

Lala Lajpat Rai, one of the great fighters for India's freedom, had written of the “Numberless American men and women who stand for the freedom of the world, who know no distinctions of colour, race or creed and who prefer the religion of love, humanity and justice.” The people of India count upon those numberless women and men of this great country to work together with them and their representatives to realise the vision that our shared experience and practice of democracy have made possible and the responsibilities of our times have rendered necessary.

Need for Looking Panchsheel Afresh

THE WORD PANCHSHEEL is full of connotations and allusions. Apart from the literary meaning—five principles or rules of conduct—it conjures the image of the five fingers of the human hand, an image of natural unity and harmony.

Speech while inaugurating the seminar on Panchsheel and Global Diplomacy on the occasion of 40th anniversary of Panchsheel, New Delhi, 27 June 1994

Although the doctrine of Panchsheel has assumed political dimensions today, we cannot forget its origins in the pacifism of Buddhism which gave us the fundamental concepts of morality then called *Pansil*.

The modern doctrine of Panchsheel is essentially Asian, not just in linguistic terms, but because of the spirit that pervades the political declaration that was propounded by the leaders of the two largest nations in the world, India and China, 40 years ago.

Elsewhere in Asia and later in Europe, we have seen the tide of Panchsheel flow over continents and pervade the political and social consciousness of vast populations. The constitution of Indonesia, the fourth largest nation-state in the world, is based on the principles of Panchsheel. While the letter of those five principles may not be identical to the Panchsheel of 1954, there can be no doubt about the unity of the spirit that moved the revolutionary leaders of our three great nations.

The great Yugoslav visionary, Marshal Tito, also recognised the wisdom of Panchsheel in the Joint Statement issued during his first visit to India which proclaimed that Panchsheel would make a substantial contribution to the lowering of world tensions and resolving all pending conflicts.

Soon thereafter Marshal Bulganin of Russia and Pandit Nehru in a Joint Statement in June 1955, affirmed, "these principles have laid down that countries differing from each other in their political, social and economic systems can and should cooperate on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in internal matters and follow a policy of active and peaceful coexistence in the common pursuit of the ideals of peace and the betterment of the conditions of human life." The universality of this doctrine became further evident during Pandit Nehru's successful tours of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Austria and Egypt.

All five principles of Panchsheel find an echo in the UN Charter. I say this consciously, despite the fact that, ostensibly, the UN Charter

was promulgated a decade before the doctrine of Panchsheel was given to us in its present form, for the good reason that Panchsheel epitomises the essential elements of the UN Charter.

Article 2 (1) of the Charter bases the UN, “on the principles of the sovereign equality of all its Members” and Article 2 (4) asks Member states of “refrain ... from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.” These are restatements of the first principle of Panchsheel.

The second principle of mutual non-aggressions found in Article 1 (1) which calls on UN Members to “maintain international peace and security” while Article 2 (3) enjoins Member states to “settle their international disputes by peaceful means.”

The third principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other states can be seen in Article 2 (7) which explicitly states that “nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state, or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter.” This principle has stood the test of time and has ensured that states unequal in size and political weight can interact democratically. No agenda for peace in the world today can be effective unless it recognises that it cannot be made an excuse for intervening in domestic affairs of states which are capable and most competent to settle their own internal matters.

The fourth principle which calls for equality and mutual benefit is again covered by Article 2(1), while Article 2(5) imposes an obligation to “give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter ...”.

The fifth principle of peaceful coexistence forms the bedrock of the UN Charter and is contained in its very Preamble which enjoins upon Member states “to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours.”

Today, the dangers facing the world may be less stark than those confronted by the founding fathers of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. Above all, the threat of a global nuclear holocaust appears to have retreated. However, antagonisms based on narrowly conceived national interests continue to plague the international system and a whole new range of challenges have emerged threatening the peace and welfare of mankind. Each generation has to interpret and apply creatively the five principles to the problems of its age. I consider this the most important aspect of the application of Panchsheel. We do not really go back to the conditions under which Panchsheel was first enunciated. We apply those principles to our own conditions today and in that lies statesmanship.

With the cold war having come to an end and with the pace of economic development growing ever faster, we need to infuse into Panchsheel new vigour which will enable this doctrine to shed light on the darkness that still pervades large areas of the world—darkness that is not alleviated even by the bright light of international diplomacy. I would like to propose five new principles. The first principle is that of *the middle path*. In the area of economic development we are subjected to a bewildering pace of computerisation, telecommunication and technological development and sometimes fail to realise that vast segments of the economy need time to catch up. While new methods of economic management must be introduced, we must never lose sight of those who cannot keep up with the pace of the forerunners.

Another principle we must always bear in mind is that to go forward in India we have to go back, *back to the village*. It is in our villages that India's heart beats; where the Green Revolution has been engineered and from where the common man creates the wealth and the artistry of India. We must never allow ourselves to get so distant from our villages that the rural Indian is treated by the urban as an alien, misunderstood and looked down upon.

From the above follows the principle of the *model village*. For the village to be a viable economic unit, it must be self-sufficient. Different regions of our great country will naturally throw up different

models which have to be cultivated and propagated carefully to ensure that rural Indians can develop their own prosperity within their own living and climatic conditions and from resources which are accessible to them, while tuned to the national cause and effort.

The fourth principle is the harmony that needs to be achieved between modern *technology and tradition*. India exports machine tools but our artisans still use crude implements. Similarly advances in relevant technologies and attention to applications of technology would yield far greater marginal benefits than the results we see from the constant commercial competition in our cosmopolitan cities.

The last principle is that of a *new world order*. The progenitors of Panchsheel faced a cold war. Today, a new world order is sought to be based on concepts such as unipolarity and multipolarity, which are best left to the pundits of power politics. We should be concerned today with joining hands within and across continents, to channelise our resources, technology and effort to enhance the well-being of our populations, rather than attempting to contain imaginary power play of fictitious foes. The new world order should breathe with the life of Panchsheel and indeed should re-establish this holy doctrine firmly in the ideology of the coming century which should see the era of peaceful coexistence.

As we gather today in Delhi and Beijing, the voice of almost half of the human race finds its echo in the affirmation of the faith that the Honourable Prime Minister of the Peoples Republic of China, Mr Li Peng and I propound from Beijing and Delhi. The wisdom of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Premier Chou-en-Lai echoes across this vast continent.

To put it in Panditji's own words "we welcome association and friendship with all and the flow of thought and ideas of all kinds, but we reserve the right to choose our own path. That is the essence of Panchsheel. These principles indicate the policy that we pursue in regard to these matters not only with China but with any neighbour country, or for that matter, any other country. What is more, it is a

statement of wholesome principles and I imagine that if these principles were adopted in the relations of various countries with one another, a great deal of trouble of the present day would probably disappear.”

It was not only Pandit Nehru's wise words which resound as true today as they did then, but also his elucidation of the symbiosis of the relationship between our two great nations. I quote his words again: “The problems they face in China are far more similar to our problems than the problems of Europe or America. There are in China and India huge agricultural communities with vast population, industrially and technologically backward, wanting to advance in welfare, wanting to have higher standards of life, wanting to industrialise, wanting to deal with land problems and all that.” These words, spoken on 13 November 1954, still reverberate in the present day relationship which has seen a tremendous growth in bilateral trade and economic cooperation between our two countries.

China and India have renewed not just the bilateral relationship but, in a way, have renewed the very interpretation of Panchsheel by setting aside differences and working towards the common goal of making their world a better place to live in for their people. To this end, we have much to share and much to learn from each other.

We are both fortunate to be heirs to great and wise civilizations, which have imbued us with the wisdom that is embodied in Panchsheel. This wisdom, handed down to us 2500 years ago is not just an expression of political intent but an article of faith. It is a faith that will one day spread to all the corners of globe and will hopefully be the agent of change and the harbinger of peace in the next century to which we look with renewed hope.

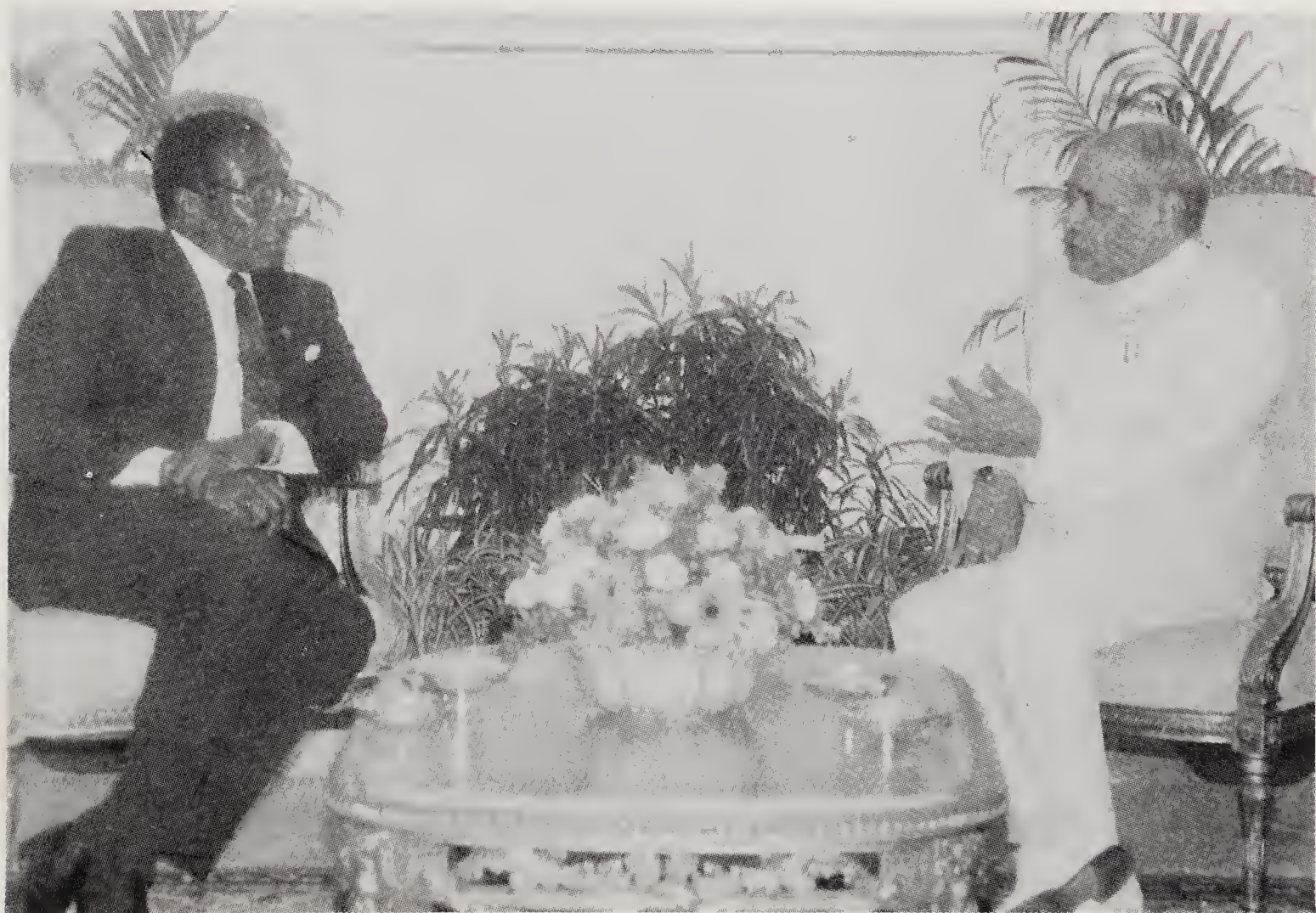
Indo-Russian Ever Growing Friendship and Cooperation

I AM DEEPLY touched by your kind words of welcome. The warmth and hospitality of the Russian people are legendary and from the moment we landed in Moscow, we know that we were among friends. Russia is an ancient and vigorous civilization constantly seeking to renew itself. The emergence of Russia as an independent sovereign state is a reaffirmation of the historical process of this renewal. Its cultural and literary heritage is renowned. Today, Russia is a new state and its people are looking forward to a new era. Throughout their long history the Russian people have repeatedly demonstrated their determination and ability to overcome the most difficult challenges. We are confident that they will once again be triumphant in their great effort to fashion a democratic and prosperous society. Mr President, your own role in this historic transformation has been of seminal importance. You epitomise the new Russia and its aspirations for freedom and democracy. Equally you symbolise the Russian people's struggle for new economic structure based on fundamental reform and transition to a market economy. We in India wish you well in these endeavours.

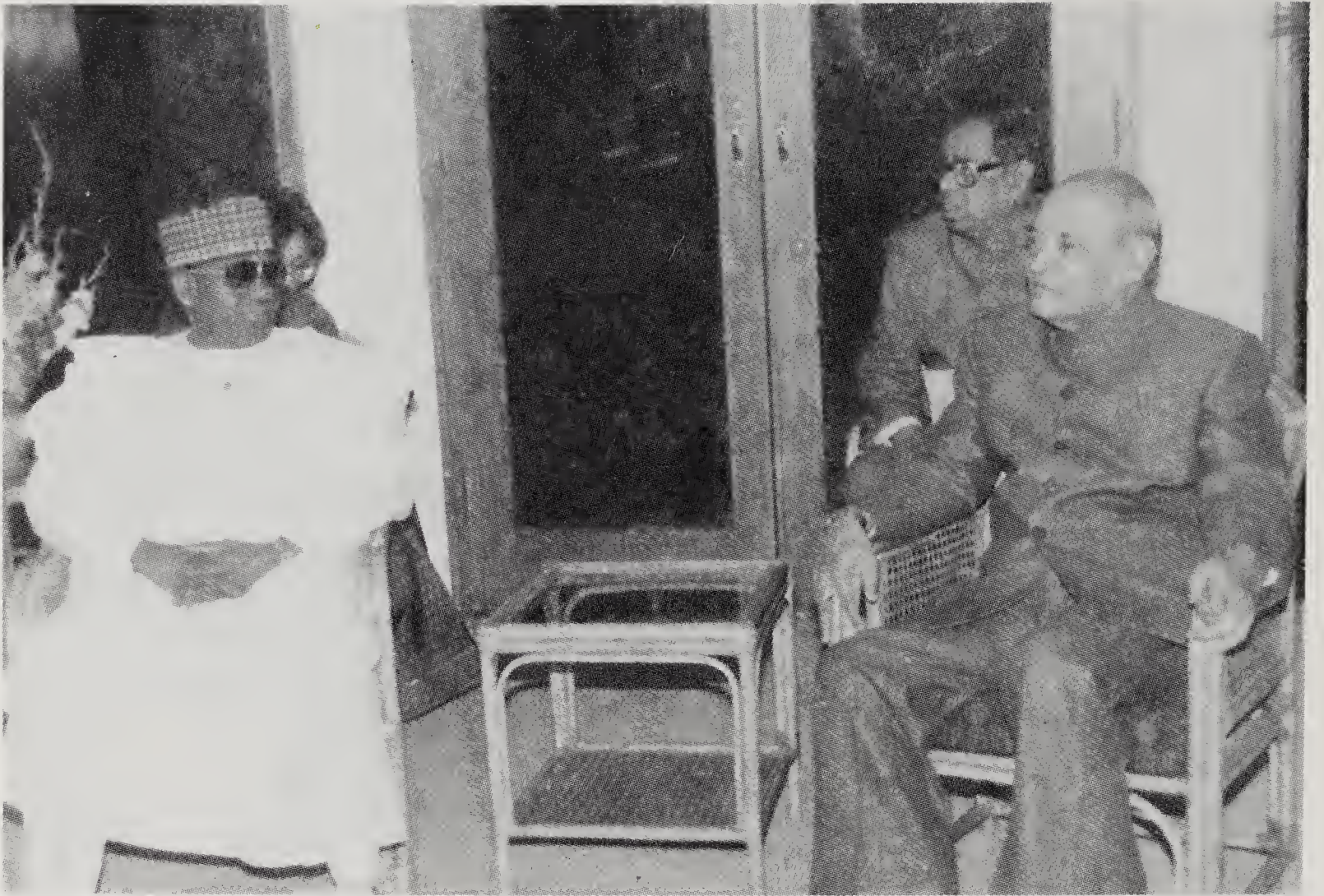
The political and economic reform process which is under way in Russia has a significance which extends far beyond your borders. It will have a profound impact on the new world order, which we will fashion and bequeath to future generations. This order, we are convinced, must be based on sovereignty, equality, respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. International relations must be structured on non-violence and renunciation of the use of force. Full respect must be accorded to human rights and the life and dignity of the individual. The world must unitedly and with determination face the international scourges of terrorism, religious fundamentalism and drug trafficking that threaten the stability and well-being of states. Economic development, eradication of



*With Heads of states and Governments of G-15 Summit,
 New Delhi, 28 March 1994*



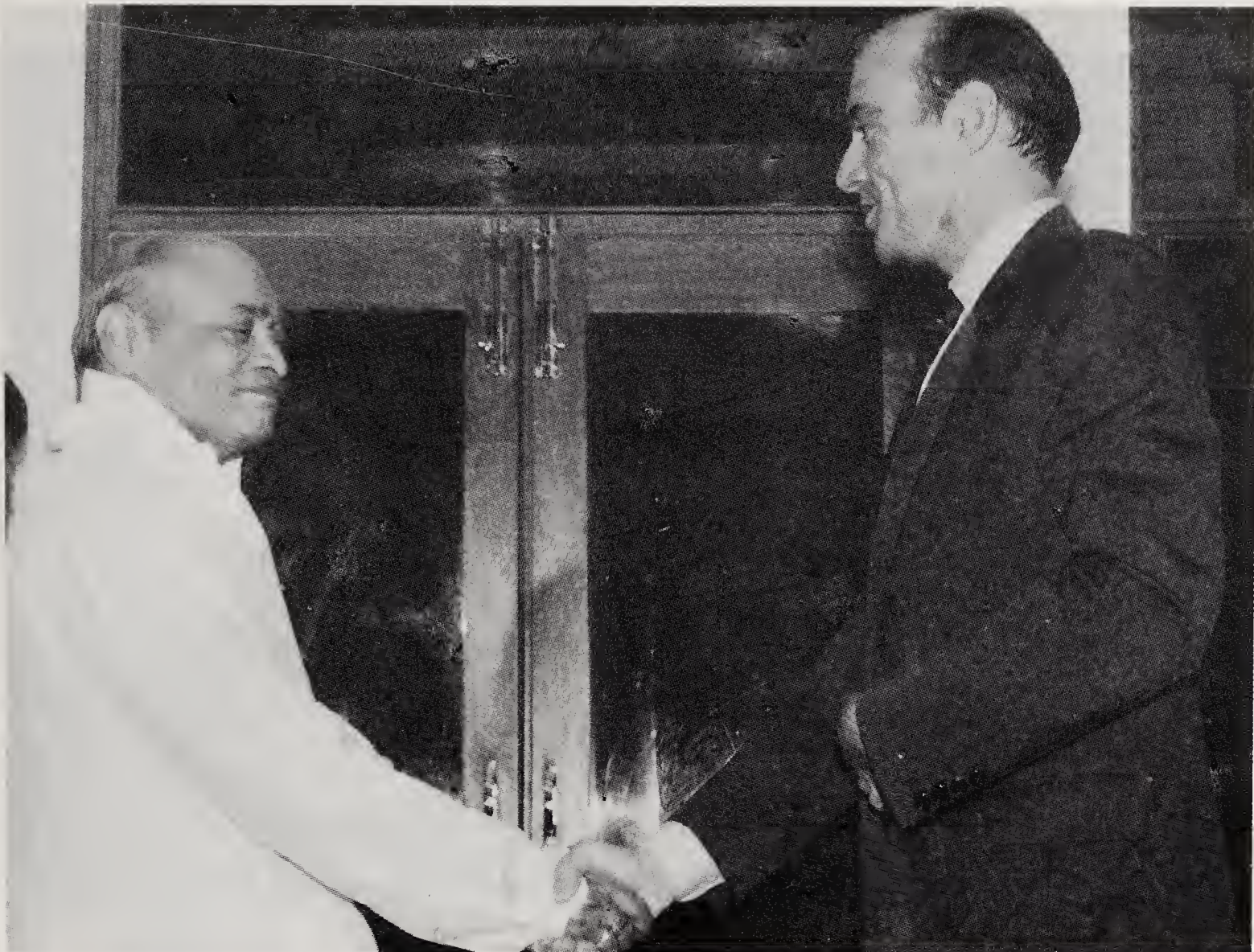
*In conversation with the President of Zimbabwe, Mr Robert G.
 Mugabe, New Delhi, 29 March 1994*



*With the President of Nigeria, Gen. Sani Abacha,
New Delhi, 30 March 1994*



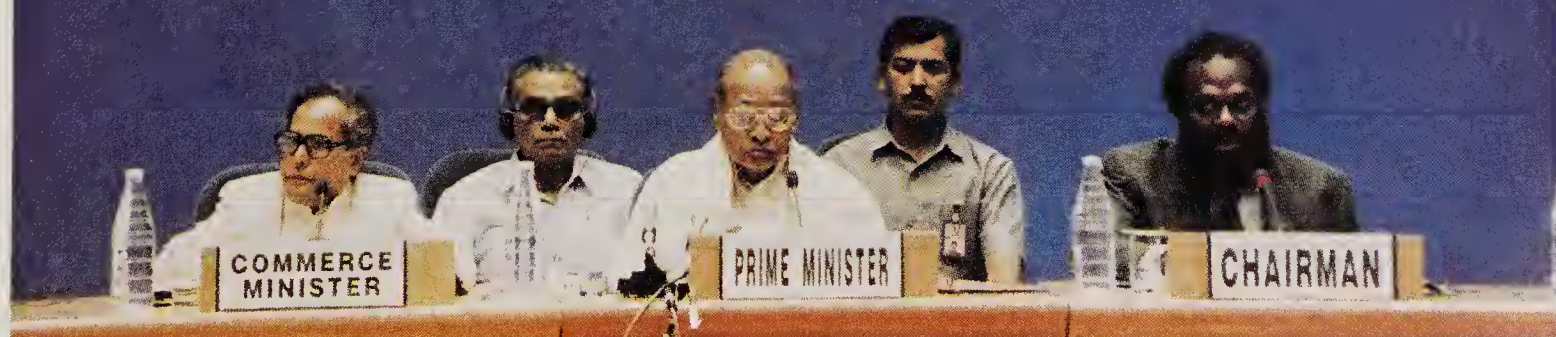
*With Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad,
New Delhi, 30 March 1994*



*With Foreign Minister of France, Mr Alain Juppe,
New Delhi, 4 April 1994*

United Nations Economic and Commission for Asia and the UN - ESCAP

New Delhi, 5 - 13 April 1994



At the 50th session of ESCAP, New Delhi, 5 April 1994



Addressing a gathering at a luncheon hosted in his honour by the Greater Houston Partnership, Houston, 16 May 1994



With the President of the World Bank, Mr Lewis Preston, Washington, 18 May 1994



*Addressing the Joint Meeting of the US Congress,
Washington, 18 May 1994*



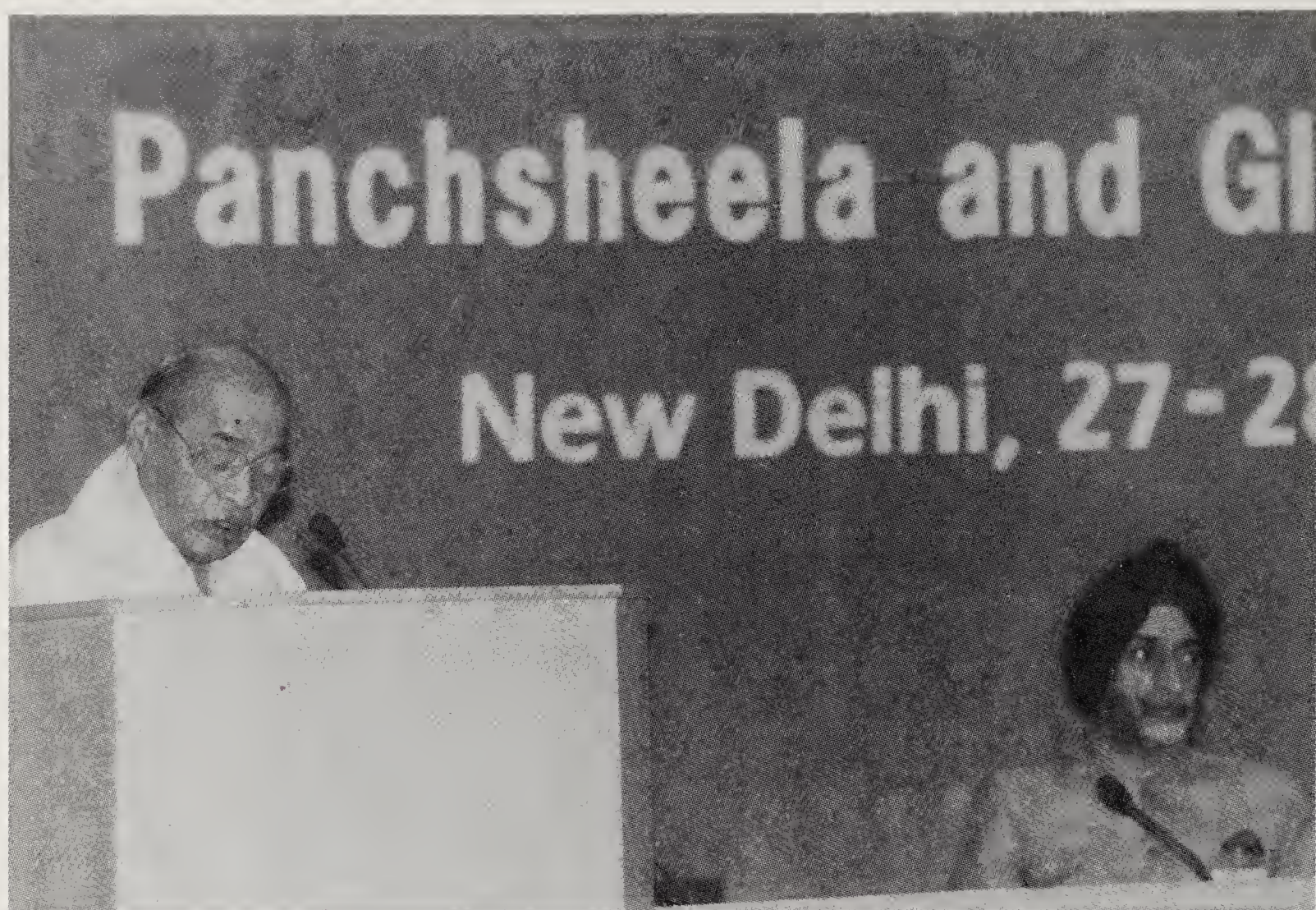
*With the US President, Mr Bill Clinton, White House,
Washington, 19 May 1994*



*Addressing the members of Indian Community, Kennedy Centre,
Washington, 19 May 1994*



*With Prince Norodom Sirivudh, Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign
Minister of Cambodia, New Delhi, 6 June 1994*



*Addressing a seminar on Panchsheel and Global Diplomacy,
New Delhi, 27 June 1994*



*With the President of Russian Federation, Mr Boris Yeltsin,
Moscow, 30 June 1994*

poverty and reduction of global inequalities are indispensable elements of the new world order which we envisage.

Mr President, India and Russia share a tradition of friendship, trust and confidence and regard this as a precious legacy to be preserved and built upon in future. Since your visit to India last year, many important steps have been taken to consolidate our bilateral relations, to renew them in the light of new realities and to prepare the ground for exploiting the mutual benefit, the new opportunities for cooperation which have arisen. There is dynamism and change in our relationship but there is equally a core of continuity based on national interests and shared values. This constitutes its basic strength and today we can look forward with confidence to ushering in a qualitatively new stage in our relations.

Mr President, recent developments in India have reaffirmed the continuity of our commitment to our basic national values as also our openness to the winds of change, which are blowing across the world. The Indian people have faced new challenges which have tested their secular ethos. They have reiterated their determination to maintain their unity while preserving the diversity, which so richly contributes to their culture and way of life. In the economic sphere considerable liberalisation has been effected. Indian industry has come of age and has acquired new resilience and strength through competition, both domestic and international. As large heterogeneous societies which cherish their multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multicultural diversities, India and Russia face a number of common challenges and tasks. I believe that our friendship and cooperation are a factor of peace and stability and can contribute in substantial measure to the shaping of the new world order.

VII
**Press Conferences &
Interviews**

Towards Making a New Beginning

I HAVE COME to the United States on what is essentially a goodwill visit aiming at strengthening bilateral ties. India and the US have traditionally had friendly relations and extensive cooperation. My mission is to build on the strength of our relationship to mutual and global benefit particularly in the new international context where we have to make a new beginning. The principle political element of my visit concluded this morning with important discussions with President Clinton. These discussions were extremely cordial and fruitful. We were very happy at this opportunity of presenting President Clinton an outline of how India looked at the world and at Indo-US relations. My discussions with President Clinton convince me that India and the US can develop a bilateral relationship with maturity and strength and that can contribute not only to mutual good but also to the world as a whole.

My visit has also had a very important economic content. Following the economic liberalisation, US has become our largest trading partner and the largest foreign investor in India. Our economic and commercial ties are now poised for substantial growth in the months and years to come.

In the course of my visit, I had very useful opportunity of meeting top US business leaders at Houston and in Washington. I was glad to note the enthusiasm that they showed in participating in India's economic growth. I was privileged to address the Joint Meeting of the US Congress at which I availed myself of the opportunity of clarifying to American policy makers India's contribution to global peace and development, our strong democratic and secular ideals and the many values and principles that India shares with the US. I told the American law-makers that given these shared ideals, the foundations for ever increasing Indo-US friendship and cooperation were stable and strong.

I was also very pleased with the opportunity of delivering the Jodidi Lecture at Harvard University in the course of which I explained

the elements underlying Indo-US relationship and a lot about India. I was very happy in the course of my visits to New York, Houston and Washington to meet the Indian community that is doing so well in this country. The greater their success in the US, the more is the credit that India derives from their efforts.

As I said earlier, my discussions with President Clinton were extremely cordial and fruitful. The undercurrent of goodwill and understanding that emanates Indo-US relations provides the basis on which both countries can tap the great potential that lies in these relations. We are the world's two largest democracies and we have many ideals in common. Take only a few examples, we believe in the rule of law. We both operate market economies. We have all religious fanaticism and violence. We are both multi-religious, multicultural societies. In the past cold war era countries like ours have a great deal to contribute in international relations. My visit to the United States reaffirms our desire to work with this country to strengthen global peace and stability and to promote development worldwide. As mature democracies, we might differ on certain issues but such differences are subsumed in the overall understanding that characterises our relationship. I am, therefore, confident that our two countries are positioned for even greater mutually beneficial interaction in the months and years to come and I am satisfied with my visit to the United States.

QUESTION-ANSWER SESSION

QUESTION: Mr Prime Minister, the President said this afternoon that the aspect of US dialogue on non-proliferation has to do with enhancing India's security and not to reduce it. Now, India's threat perception has more to do with China than to Pakistan and that US does not seem to have any

PRIME MINISTER: I don't know why you are taking it for granted that India's security is in one direction and not in another. I don't think our discussions were predicted on that hypothesis at all. It was security in general and given that goodwill of the President, he said that he

doesn't want to do anything which will detract the security of several friendly countries. That is a very general statement and I think it is a valid statement.

QUESTION: President Clinton said today that the differences have remained on key issues between the two countries. Could you identify what they were and could you also tell us whether the areas of agreement have enlarged, if at all, after your visit ?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, the most important outcome is that if we have reservations on any issue, only the wrong reasons have been adduced so far. We have not had the opportunity as fully as we ought to have had of explaining our positions to each other and giving why we have the reservations that we have on both sides and that clears much of the misunderstanding that might have been there. So I think, this is a very good new first step towards understanding.

QUESTION: (Inaudible. The question was about Kashmir.) When can the Hindus who have become refugees in their own country go back to Kashmir ? How come it is taking too long to solve the problem in Kashmir, whereas you have done a marvellous job in Punjab ?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, the situations are essentially not the same. We have succeeded in Punjab and we are confident of succeeding in Kashmir. As I said, there is difference. The kind of export of terrorism to India, to Kashmir that is taking place has been quite high and you may kindly remember that Punjab itself has taken more than 11 years. So, after it is solved, it is easy to look back and make comparisons. But I would like the Kashmir question to be solved and the difficulty to be got over in a much shorter period....

QUESTION: Did you take up the issue of F-16s supply to Pakistan with Bill Clinton when you met him ?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, in a general way, we discussed these matters. But I don't think it was the intention of either of us to go into each detail. Our views on F-16s are well known. They have been

made known to the important people in the US administration. They know what we feel about it. But I don't think, it was my intention or his intention within that short time to go into each particular item. That is why I said the question of security was taken up in a general way. Now, we have to elaborate on it in subsequent dialogue and what we have done today is to open up the way for further talks. That is what he also told at the Press conference.

QUESTION: Kashmir has been one of the trouble-spots in Indo-US relations and there has been a tremendous amount of concern of India's side whenever the Clinton administration has not accepted that Kashmir is an integral part of India and also because of the direct dialogue between the Clinton administration as well as groups that are considered to be militant and fundamentalist by your administration ? Was that issue brought up at all and could you also brief us on any kind of understanding or probably more concern on the part of the Clinton administration that might have been achieved at this level ? Also, the second part of the question is on *vis-a-vis* the Indo-Pak relations and United States, do you think that your having visited Washington prior to Ms Bhutto will have any impact on giving India the edge...?

PRIME MINISTER: Is she visiting ?

QUESTION: No. But the fact that you have already visited..?

PRIME MINISTER: You see, we don't synchronise, we don't look back, we don't find out who is coming before or after.

QUESTION: As far as the Kashmir question is concerned, the fact that the Clinton administration has not accepted the 1972 Shimla Accord, could you shed some light on that ?

PRIME MINISTER: I don't think we went into the Constitutional aspects. We went into the actual situation as we find it there and that is definitely more important than the India Independence Act of forty or forty-five years ago. In any case, if opinions have been expressed, those opinions really do not matter. Kashmir is an integral part of India and there is hardly anything to rebut that, opinions apart.

QUESTION: (Inaudible. The question was about problems facing the NRIs and foreign investors investing in India.)

PRIME MINISTER: I think we are approving a lot of trips abroad and when a proposal comes, we know what it is about and we have been giving all facilities to them and they have done very well. No one has any complaint. If they have complained to you, that is a different matter. They have not complained to me.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

PRIME MINISTER: I don't know what you are talking about apart from the sarcasm in it. But talks will take place at the foreign office level and this is what, I think, has been decided.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

PRIME MINISTER: That is what I am saying that there is a technology agreement in the offing. Let us look at the agreement, I have not seen the text of the agreement. See what it contains, you will know about it.

QUESTION: As you are aware Prime Minister, the Indian-American community in States was supposed to be ... In that context may I ask you to give an assessment of ... and secondly, if you plan to visit Zericho and Israel ?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, visits are a normal feature. But I don't have any plans right now. You know we upgraded diplomatic relations with Israel about a year and a half back. Since then the relations have been good. Several of our ministers and others have visited Israel for several areas of cooperation that we are interested in, like solar energy, like agriculture, like drip-irrigation and so on. I think, it is going on well.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

PRIME MINISTER: I think we know it much better what is happening next door. You see they will get their reports and I don't want to

discount any report and I don't want to comment on the report. That is what he told, you heard him.

QUESTION: It is widely speculated that the main bone of contention between India and the United States has been US desire India to sign the NPT and India's reluctance in this matter. I know that perhaps you cannot discuss openly what was discussed ...

PRIME MINISTER: No, I can tell you very plainly that nobody asked me to sign something which is on its way out and I have not either agreed... or even discussed about it. It is now accepted on both sides. I hope that the NPT and the signing of the NPT in its present form when it is expiring next year, doesn't arise.

QUESTION: I would like to know what transpired between your one-to-one meeting with the President of the United States ... Apparently now the contentious issues figured in those talks and so what were his concerns...? Do you think you can do business with him, particularly in the wake of reports during the past six months that the Clinton administration has been less than friendly while making statements about several issues ... ?

PRIME MINISTER: That is what I was trying to tell you, all that has changed and today the atmosphere is quite different as he himself said, it is not necessary for two Governments to be identical in their views. The difference don't come down or don't evaporate overnight. When there is a difference, the only way is to explain to each other, tell each other, what the difference is, try to circumscribe it, try to identify the exact extent of the difference and that is the way you go on with talks and this process will go on while we are cooperating on certain matters on which we agree like the Test Ban Treaty. Now, it wasn't easy. At the political level, at our level, we only expressed our satisfaction that on the economic side cooperation is looking up and in the months and years to come, it is more than likely to go up further. Since the last one year as you know, within one year, the trade figures have gone up by 44 per cent, which means that something has happened for the first time of this magnitude and the expectation is that in the years to come it will

still go up and the cooperation on the economic side will broaden, will deepen and will become more effective and more visible in India. You see, India is such a large country, everything is lost. You may say on paper that it is 44 per cent and all that, but then unless it becomes visible unless it takes some benefit to the people and the benefit reaches the people, until then nothing is felt. You can as well say nothing is happening. So, in that large country, anything to be visible, anything to be felt, anything to have an impact takes time and a very large magnitude of that activity.

QUESTION : (Inaudible. About Narmada Project.)

PRIME MINISTER : I don't know, I haven't seen them. Anyway, if there is any question which anyone can raise, I mean you can raise, you don't have to depend upon them to raise. Narmada is a question very well-settled now, it is on the way to settlement. The rehabilitation package, I have looked into it myself. I have been taking personal interest in it.

And, I give you my view of the thing. It is better to keep it to the issue itself. Whatever needs to be done will be done. But if someone says Narmada itself should not come, then I say sorry I don't agree.

QUESTION: (In Hindi) Mr Prime Minister, we have gathered an impression that from your view point, this trip seems to be quite successful. One thing I would like to know from you, what were the apprehensions shrouding the minds of the entrepreneurs, which unfolded during your long deliberations with them and what were the doubts irritating them most ? What was your solution, which satisfied them ? Another thing about which I would seek clarification from you is that people talk about patent, mental resources ? Did you have any statement from American entrepreneurs or from their representatives?

PRIME MINISTER: (In Hindi) No, this time, there was no issue, which could be termed as specific. I understand that whatever they said has encouraged us and I do not find that they have created some big problem.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

PRIME MINISTER: I don't think they are responsible to make proposals about our security at all. I thought it is our duty to do that.

QUESTION: (In Hindi) Mr Prime Minister, Kashmir has been the bone of contention between India and Pakistan and Pakistan's attitude towards Kashmir has always been aggressive. We always talk in term of our defence, why is it so, why can't we assume the same aggressive posture in this regard. Why do we not say that whatever Pakistan is saying is wrong? Why does India not raise the issue of atrocities being perpetrated on Kashmiries by Pakistan.

PRIME MINISTER: (In Hindi) I do not understand that how one, who indulges in excessive shouting, becomes aggressive. We have been repeatedly saying that Kashmir is a part of India and it will ever remain so, how else more firm one can be than this? It is good that one who has no issue, indulges in shouting, what will you do in this?

QUESTION: What has been the main achievement of your visit to the United States?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, you have all come with me.

Economic Reforms, Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Exit Policy

QUESTION: HAVE THE economic reforms introduced by your Government helped the man in the street? Is there opposition to the reforms?

PRIME MINISTER: By and large the results of the bye-elections, the results on occasions when Government policies are tested, are very good. They have never been so favourable to the ruling party at any time in the past. That is one litmus test.

I can confidently say that there is no question of going back on the reforms because where will we go to? You cannot get the old policies back, people know that this is not possible and they are happy about it.

QUESTION: What are your views on the post cold war foreign policy of the Clinton administration and the delay in appointment of an ambassador to India?

PRIME MINISTER: Well, I think it has fallen to the lot of President Clinton to do everything, to conceptualize everything. He is a pioneer in that and no pioneer knows all the ropes. As for the delays in appointments and so on I can only say that these are normal delays. Yes, we did notice that the US ambassador in Delhi was not there for a long time but that, I think, we should understand.

QUESTION: How would you respond to criticism of red tape still persisting in the implementation of the economic reform programme?

PRIME MINISTER: There is always room for improvement but there are no innumerable number of approvals now needed. I do not think there is a vested interest in getting things held up. It could happen in the States because all the infrastructural facilities have to be provided by the State governments. They are not at the Centre. When they go to the State, it is possible that the land is under litigation, or to cite another instance, they have to wait for electricity. It may take some time to lay the line and so on. Meanwhile other things are taken care of till the work is done. In fact, we are asking mainly for infrastructure to be created there; we are asking the telecommunication people to come. This is how it is. To go to India, a developing country, and say that infrastructure is not available is something which has no meaning because they are deficient in this and you are going there to put it there.

QUESTION : There has been some comment that the postponement of the VSNL issue is a setback. Your views?

PRIME MINISTER: There was some setback. They could not get the offers that they expected, so they said, well, some other time, instead of allowing it to lead to a situation where you would have to break down your own plans.

QUESTION: What are the prospects for privatisation of industry?

PRIME MINISTER: We can afford to do that, but we cannot afford to say that, we have abolished the public sector, lock, stock and barrel. That is not going to be accepted. Complete dismantling is not on the cards right now in any case. I have been explaining to the people that the public sector in India covers just about 30 per cent of the needs; we are not going to expand, so the remaining 70 per cent is available to the private sector.

Some government-owned companies are sick, some are bad, and we are trying to get rid of them somehow. Some are unnecessary, for instance, we were running some hotels. The time has come when this need not be the business of the government, but we did not have a proper hotel when we started; needs have changed and alternative sources have now come forward, which we can tap.

QUESTION: Mr Prime Minister, there has been considerable talk about differences between India and the United States on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation. How did your discussions with the President go?

PRIME MINISTER: I do not think either of us expected any definite conclusions at the first meeting. We said these are matters where we need to talk more. We need to understand each other. There are so many areas in non-proliferation on which we can work together. It is not a question of signing a document. Let us see how it shapes—whether the review of it changes it in such a way so that it comes closer to be in line with our own thinking. What shape it is going to take, we do not

know, but it is very unrealistic to ask me to sign it in the very last year of its existence.

QUESTION: What advantages does India offer to investors?

PRIME MINISTER: They (American business) seem to be viewing it as a very good prospect. That is the impression I gathered. I am not saying that everything should come to India. There are so many developing countries. One has to look to the whole world also in this. So I am not really on an expedition to drag everybody to India.

QUESTION: What is the position regarding the Exit Policy?

PRIME MINISTER: When we started the New Policy, our opposition attacked us on this. They said the New Policy was going to throw workers out of work. It did not happen. After two years I asked them to cite one case of retrenchment that had occurred because of this Policy, and they could not.

QUESTION: What are your views on the introduction of labour standards in global trade?

PRIME MINISTER: We have stated our position on it, because on the whole these moves try to scuttle the comparative advantage of developing countries. It does not mean that we are not treating our labour well, or not paying them well. We have many stringent laws which compel the employer to treat his employees well.

Years of Formidable Challenges and Achievements

SMT MRINAL PANDE: Hon'ble Prime Minister, when you took over the Government three years ago, what did you think were the challenges before the country and what are the challenges now ?

PRIME MINISTER: At that time our first concern was to extinguish the fire. That has been done. Now we want to implement the policies we have formulated. It was not a very easy task to formulate the policies and the circumstances under which we were introducing them were also not favourable either. We had some compulsions and we had our requirements. Some people say that our policies were introduced for the sake of compulsions only. I do not believe in all such things. However at the same time I say that if we were not faced with these compulsions, we would not have brought in changes in our policies so soon. You will have to acknowledge it.

PANDE: But one thing comes to mind that you could initiate the basic changes in your policies because of an atmosphere of stability. Will this stability last or is it like a volcano whose eruption has been postponed for a few years?

PRIME MINISTER: It is difficult for me to say that. You may put this question to an astrologer. I can only say that the steps we had taken to extinguish the fire were not emergency measures and even today we do not consider them so. We are going into the causes which led to the fire. I won't say that we have solved the problem fully. But we are not dealing with it superficially. The problem is very serious and deep-rooted. The problems that need to be tackled immediately, are being tackled on priority basis at all levels. We are dealing with those problems too which are to be dealt with gradually with the help of the law. We have to keep in mind the long term effects. It is not possible

for me to state what will happen after say, ten years or twenty years. But I do hope that the way we are trying to tackle the problems on all fronts, keeping in mind all aspects, will definitely help.

PANDE: Recently in the Congress General Session, you had said that keeping in mind the Hindi belt, it was very necessary to energise the party there. You also said that some drastic steps would be taken. Can you throw some light on that?

PRIME MINISTER: No doubt, in the coming few days, drastic steps will be taken. I do not consider them so drastic. Because any step taken to bring in some reforms, to introduce changes in anything would seem to be drastic on the first day, but on the next day they won't seem so drastic. With the passage of time people get used to the changes. I feel that we should try to take some drastic steps immediately. Shortly I am going to Russia. On my return from there, I will devote myself to that work. I believe that it is necessary to do that and it has to be done very soon. We will do it.

PANDE: Another expectation, the country has of you is the expansion of your Ministry. You have yourself said that on a number of occasions. Will you take that up too on your return from Russia or would you follow a policy of wait and watch?

PRIME MINISTER: I am not evading the issue. I am not following a policy of wait and watch. The Ministry can be expanded any time. We know that the newspapers give the news of the expansion of the Ministry when they don't have any other news. Publication or non-publication of the news has no effect on the expansion of the Ministry. It will take place when it is destined to.

PANDE: All the parties including yours have expressed concern over criminalisation of politics. Recently such incidents have come to light in many States which show that the tendency has not halted and the situation in the Hindi speaking States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is very serious. what is your reaction to such a state of affairs?

PRIME MINISTER: My reaction is that such a situation was not created overnight and it cannot be set right overnight. Criminals have made a place for themselves in the society. I do not say that they have a say, but they do have a place i.e. during the elections, they can do things which would affect the result of the polls. When all the parties try to bring in such pressures, criminalisation sets in on all fronts. I feel that all parties should unite on this issue and decide that whether they win or lose, whatever may happen, they would put a stop to criminalisation of politics. It is not that we induct a criminal in our party and give him a ticket. Criminalisation takes place in such a way that we are not even aware of it. They join the party, they become respectable, they create a place for themselves in the society and after that it is impossible to disown them. It becomes very difficult to dislodge them. However I think that it is not a very difficult task since all the parties believe that criminalisation of politics should be got rid of.

PANDE: Our election system is very much responsible for criminalisation of politics. When will you introduce reforms in the election system and what kind of reforms do you think are necessary?

PRIME MINISTER: It is an ongoing work. So far, so many reforms have been introduced. When a reform is introduced, its offender finds a way to circumvent it. A continuous process of reforms should go on. Recently a draft Bill for reforms has been introduced. There is a further scope for such Bills. I believe that all parties are unanimous on the issue of election reforms. However there can be some difference of opinion on what should be the quantum of reforms or when reform proposals are to be discussed point by point. Notwithstanding that, we can arrive at some sort of agreement.

PANDE: Another complex issue is corruption. Your party is duty-bound to remove corruption and in the last three years many cases have come to light. But the people feel that when such cases are exposed, they are widely debated and high-level committees are set up to probe them. But the investigation procedure takes such a long time that the guilty are not punished immediately and publicly. This, in some way encourages corruption and gives rise to criminalisation.

PRIME MINISTER: We can't do much in this connection. We have our laws. It is impossible to punish the guilty without taking recourse to laws. The law will take its own course. It takes time, it has a procedure and we should not be impatient. We should think of the ways to reduce the time taken by a case. We must reduce the time taken by the rules of procedure. At the same time it is a rule of justice and we should take care that in haste we do not punish the innocent.

PANDE: Similarly another issue which is related to law is the Anti-Defection Bill which was introduced in Parliament by your party. But we find that it has not stopped the politics of make and break. Is it a healthy trend or is it an unavoidable trend, what do you think?

PRIME MINISTER : Just compare the kind of party defections that used to take place ten years ago and which are taking place today. You will find that there is much difference between the two. Today party defections or breaking a party is not easy. It is not impossible but at the same time it is not easy either. It takes months to do so. A person who wants to break a party is constantly in the pursuit of Members who are likely to join him. It takes time and occasionally there are obstacles too on the way. From the number of cases of defections of the parties or breaking of the parties it is evident that it was easy to do so before the passage of the Anti-Defection Bill but now it is not so. So the case of defection of the parties come to your notice but not the stopping of it.

PANDE : In the last three years you have introduced a number of revolutionary changes in the Economic Policy. What is the reason that only urban middle class and the industrial world are quite enthusiastic about these changes but the rural folk, especially the agriculturists and the labourers are even now apprehensive and doubtful about the Exit Policy and GATT proposals?

PRIME MINISTER : Look , this is such a big country. The reforms you introduce won't yield results in a short span, however good they may be. Suppose you get a business of say ten thousand crores or fifty thousand crores, what effect will it have on this vast country? The

impact you desire will take place only if there is an industrialisation on a large scale. All the States and the rural areas will have its benefits. We know that in the initial few years the benefits won't reach the rural areas. So we have made a provision of Rs. thirty thousand crore in the Eighth Five Year Plan. This money will go directly to the rural areas and not through any intermediary agency and will be spent on rural development. The villagers are not educated. They do not have any technical qualifications. They have no money. Crores of such people work as labourers and earn their bread. They suffer if they do not get work. We have to save them from their sufferings. Our first task is to provide employment to the people in the rural areas. You know that we have introduced a number of schemes for providing employment to the rural poor. We are trying to meet their basic requirements. Some of the villagers may have some sort of education. So for them we have started a separate scheme. We have a separate scheme for women. But how many will be benefited? The money allocated is much less than the requirement. To meet the requirement of the country, we want more money and more time. It is true that the money allocated is four times more than what was allocated in the Seventh Five Year Plan. But getting elated by saying that it is four times more won't help. The thirty thousand crore is like a drop in the ocean. We have to find money drop by drop. Only then something can be done. But that will take time. I believe that the funds allocated for rural development is not having the desired impact. In future when allocation is increased, say two fold, four fold or eight fold, people will start noticing that something is being done.

PANDE : Mr Prime Minister, our income is, no doubt, increasing gradually. But our population is even now growing at a faster rate. Our yearly growth rate is equivalent to the entire population of Australia. Can we take some revolutionary steps which would yield quick results?

PRIME MINISTER : Recently a Sub-Committee of the National Development Council has made some recommendations. We are trying our best to implement them. It is a national problem but if anybody tries to derive a political mileage out of it, our efforts will fail. That has happened before. The programme was making a good

progress and all of a sudden it came to a halt. For at least ten years it remained inoperative.

PANDE : Was it not the reason that the parties kept this issue at a distance and ignored to take it up?

PRIME MINISTER : No, right now they are not ignoring it. Because they accepted it in the meeting of the National Development Council that a Committee should be formed to look after the implementation of the recommendations and the Central Government and the State governments, irrespective of the parties they belong to, have to implement the recommendations. I believe that the 10 years aloofness of the parties is over and they are willing to involve themselves in the implementation. I believe that it will have good result.

PANDE : Just now you talked of involvement. A basic reform of far-reaching significance your party and Government has taken up, is the expansion of Panchayati Raj. But it raises a doubt for the future. Panchayati Raj is essential for democratic set-up. However, if the poor become politically conscious their economic condition will remain the same or can possibly worsen still further. Under such conditions won't we have social conflicts as there are in the countries of Africa and Latin America?

PRIME MINISTER : I don't think that there is a possibility of that happening here because the economic inequality in the rural areas is narrowing. There are no big Zamindars these days. A farmer does not have five thousand or ten thousand acres of land today. There have been reforms in the land ownership. Some would give the correct figure of the acres of land they have, some would try to conceal. But that does not make much difference. At the most one generation will be able to retain it. After that it will be divided. So the rural condition is such that economic disparity cannot widen much. Everyone will get some work when there is industrialisation. It is possible that some of the rural people might go to cities and become millionaires or billionaires. That does not make any difference. These days we see that persons go abroad and send money from there. With that money, he

gets a palatial house built in a small village. He does not know how to use that money. When he returns from abroad, he feels that the house is of no use. People recognise him, and also become little jealous of him but he derives no benefit from that palatial building. So to teach as well as to learn, how to use money, is also necessary. With the increase in income, people will learn gradually how and where to invest money to derive the maximum benefit. When they don't have money, the question of thinking all this does not arise. I believe that to build good houses, pucca houses in those desolated villages where there is nothing but small huts will require an investment of thousands of crores of rupees. But that is not such a revolutionary thing. But it will be a revolutionary change in a person's life if he gets a good house, a pucca house in place of his hut made of hay and grass.

PANDE : But there is one thing whose dangerous portents are clear in sight. Today, Delhi is the world's fourth most polluted city. The price one has to pay for industrial development is pollution of the environment. It adversely affects women and children. Water, fuel and fodder have almost disappeared. It has given rise to social violence also. Will the country continue to suffer for the sake of industrialisation and sacrifice its social values or will there be reconsideration of the development programmes afresh? What is your opinion?

PRIME MINISTER : I am of the definite view that whatever is happening, should be stopped mercilessly. Whatever we do in this direction is not enough. We have caused enough damage so far. But that poses a question, which I had raised in the A.I.C.C. session and also in America. The question is, on what scale can you run an industry in order to make it economically viable. Mahatma Gandhi had said that in large-scale industry you don't get anything except social tensions. That is true. We have realised that from our experience, other countries are also learning from experience. The organisations such as Green Parties and others have opposed the large-scale industries. So all of us, not only from India or from developing countries but also from developed countries have to think of changing the technology in such a way that it favours the small-scale industries. Sophistication can be achieved on small-scale. But we should not revert completely to our

old, conservative ways. The question is, can we make equally good things on small-scale? I do not think any one has a ready-made answer. But we will have to work for a few years to find the solution.

PANDE : You said that countries specially the developing countries should think collectively. India is very active in the Non-Aligned Movement. But for the last few years the Non-Aligned Movement has become very weak. Same is the case with SAARC. It too is not so effective as people had expected it. What kind of international platform or forum will be desirable?

PRIME MINISTER : I don't think that Non-Aligned Movement has totally become inactive or has become weak. People think that there is no need of it now. But now they have found the justification. The word non-aligned causes confusion in the minds of the people. When there are no blocs, what purpose would Non-Aligned Movement serve? It is an obvious question. But the Movement is not just Non-Aligned. I believe that the Non-Aligned Movement is a symbol of national independence. Every country has a right to defend its independence and take decisions which it thinks are good. In exercising of sovereignty, blocs do not come in the picture. It does not matter whether there are two blocs or fifty blocs. So today what we call Non-Aligned Movement is equally useful as far as nationalism and national sovereignty is concerned as it is in relation to blocs. Everyone realises that. Now so many changes are taking place that at times the contribution of Non-Aligned Movement can be quite great and at times not so great. Non-Aligned Movement cannot do much in the present circumstances. It is necessary for it to change its priority. So far its priority was political. We were fighting for the freedom of those countries which were not free. We supported their cause but now all the countries have become free. Now we have to lay great stress on economic problems, and this we are already doing. It is not proper to think that Non-Aligned Movement has become weak, it has only to change its agenda. It takes some time to change the agenda and while doing so there might be some difficulties too.

PANDE : We have from time to time difficulties with our two important neighbours, Pakistan and Bangladesh on some issue or the other. We

have a dispute with Bangladesh over Farakka waters for quite some time. After 1989 the treaty with Bangladesh has not been renewed. Similarly we have dispute with Pakistan. What are your views on the subject?

PRIME MINISTER : I do not believe that water dispute with Bangladesh is such an issue which cannot be solved. Even at present we are working on it. It is difficult but I believe it will be solved. With Pakistan, I do not know, what kind of an agreement we can arrive at when it goes on exporting terrorism to which there is no end. Thousands of terrorists enter our country with arms and ammunitions and attack our innocent and peace loving people and shed their blood. What can we do till they don't stop their activities which we call a proxy war? We have been telling them that it is very necessary to stop it but our entreaties fall on deaf ears. They feel that exporting terrorism to India is their national duty. We can only remain in a state of preparedness and occasionally give them a befitting reply, that too in self-defence. we are not invading the other country by entering into its territory. What more or what less can we do than that?

PANDE : Russia had played an important role in reducing the tensions with Pakistan or creating a cordial atmosphere with it. Shortly you are going to Russia. What do we expect from your visit?

PRIME MINISTER : I do not think that my trip to Russia would yield something tangible in this regard. Let us see.

PANDE : The Government is negotiating with the multinational companies in the field of telecommunication. In what proportion the field will be thrown open for the multinationals and how much of it will be kept reserved for our telecommunication industry ?

PRIME MINISTER : We are giving final shape to the Policy. That will be before you in a few days.

PANDE : A similar issue is that of foreign newspapers and telecast by foreign satellite television agencies. They are knocking at the door. What will be the decision ?

PRIME MINISTER : So far we have not come to an agreement. Some argue in favour of it and some against it. The important thing is that there is an old decision taken by our Cabinet on it and we are bound by it. Under these circumstances we have to think what can we do.

PANDE : Most often it remains unnoticed that you are a connoisseur of music, a good linguist and a good translator. Do you get enough time for reading, writing and listening to music?

PRIME MINISTER : Certainly.

PANDE : Finally one more question. Your image is that of a leader who is keen to seek an approval, on every national issue, not only of the important members of your party but also of the members of the Opposition whether it is an issue of human rights at Geneva or construction of the temple. You have often talked of 'national will'. That only leads to national government. What do you have to say on this ?

PRIME MINISTER : I do not see any room for national government at the moment. It is enough if the Government while taking a decision consults everyone. That is called consensus. If it is only the running of the Government it can be done with the minority or majority in the Lok Sabha. We had run the Government with the minority, so how can you raise this question after we have got the majority.

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